

PASTORING WITHOUT PRESSURE: A TWENTY-FIRST
CENTURY MODEL FOR HOLISTIC HEALTH
FOR PASTORS AND PEOPLE

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ABSTRACT

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by

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The context of this project was modeled after The Christ Centered Church in Youngstown, Ohio. The purpose of this project was to examine alternative resources and financial possibilities that will help pastors and people establish a holistic and healthier religious life. If the burden of financing the cost of doing pastoral ministry were subsidized by outside sources, the pastor would be free to do ministry without restrictions. The project's hypothesis was tested using a mixed method and qualitative approach. Pre/posttest, questionnaires, focus groups, and a workshop were used to extrapolate the field data. The project was successful.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I offer my sincere appreciation and gratitude to God for providing me with this opportunity to engage in such a process like this one. It was an unimaginable experience and one that had if it not been for Him, it would not have been possible. Choosing me remains to be a humbling experience and I will use all that I learned for His Glory in Kingdom building.

I am amazed at the support from the two churches which I Pastor. Both New Shield of Faith and Spread the Word Christian Ministries were my angels throughout the entire process. They also served as the context for my project. Thank you for your understanding, patience, and kindness. You all blessed me with your faithfulness in doing what I expected and what God required.

My mentor, Father in ministry, and in my journey of life, Dr. Earl Riggins. Thank you for teaching me the value of mentorship. Thank you, too, for encouraging, guiding, and nurturing me. Your presence in my space reminds me that God is everything He says He is. You continue to bless “my bones”.

Finally, thank you to my mentors, Dr. Angela Washington and Dr. Donnell Moore. You were the best mentors I could have had. You stretched me to heights and places I didn’t dream of. Thank you for believing in me and reminding me to “trust” the process. I call you my friends.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Regina Belle-Battle who is my life-long friend. Her love and consistent support of me in all my endeavors remains priceless. Any success I experienced is because she has been by my side. I thank her and love her with my whole heart.

To, my five children, Winter G. Joffrion, Tiy C. Battle, Jayln N. Battle, Sydni M. Battle, and Nyla G. Battle; four grandchildren, Lei'a M.V. Joffrion, Joshua D. Joffrion, Amara R. Battle, Aubrey Battle. You all keep me alive with your love and I love you more than myself.

To, Bishop (Dr.) Kenneth Paramore, my best friend in the whole world, his wife, and family. Your friendship has been an anchor for me and my family.

To Lafayette Mosley (Coach Moe) who insisted that I work hard in high school and become a true student athlete. I am alive today and a better man because of him.

To Gloria Weaver whose energy, encouraging words, and editorial skills undergirded the completion of this process from beginning to end.

Finally, to my mother, Marjorie V. Jackson, who is looking down on me from heaven along with other sisters and brothers. Her spirit is always with me and my memories of her never fades.

INTRODUCTION

Pastoring Without Pressure: A Twenty-First Century Model For Holistic Health For Pastors And People, focuses on the primary pastoral leader serving in the church, and subsequently the assembly of people who live as the church. The theme of this project is to create a viable model for pastors and churches across the country to consider the fact that pastors serve under tremendous personal pressure regarding resources as they seek to help a congregation of people. This model will present a way for the pastors who are aspiring to live a life that scripture describes without the associated worries of everyday living. In the twenty-first century churches and seminaries there are those who are looking to make pastoral leadership a career yet find themselves in circumstances where they must subsidize their living through other parallel vocational pursuits. Pastoring Without Pressure will attempt to offer an alternative process by which a preacher can be compensated to do the work of the kingdom more effectively.

This may be considered a radical move or even an evolutionary approach because it seeks to employ an unlimited well of resources that could be tapped into from the secular world and the application of some business practices. Although the concept will look like any other business application, it will still have a holistic purpose. Very often people think that the world of corporate dynamics does not belong in the church, but what we do not realize is that the church uses a business model of some sort to finance church construction and renovation, church vans, buses and other church projects. The church at times has

demonstrated by precept and deed the necessity of using a business application to enhance the ministry of God. Subsidized material resources do not mean that we are conforming to this world or giving in to the worlds' system. The bottom-line is that the twenty-first century church must adapt from a financial standpoint its traditional way of doing business to keep pace with rapidly changing societal forces.

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, will deal with my spiritual journey, the journey of the context and the pressing needs of the congregation to be able to maximize the growth of God's kingdom on earth.

Chapters two through five deals with the Biblical, Historical, Theological, and Theoretical foundations that undergird and inform the basis of the project model. The biblical foundation identifies the problem to be dealt with from a biblical perspective. The Bible is the ultimate authority on life and therefore, the people of God should consult it as the primary resource for problem solving. In this wise, both the problem and solutions for the problem at hand are found in various scriptures of the Bible. The historical foundation demonstrates how the problem of the context has been treated down through history from a particular point until today. For our purposes we will move from the period of the reformation and chronicle the problem and how it has been treated in the church up and including today.

The theological foundation, like the biblical foundation speaks to how scholars and theologians speak about the problem and solutions. For our purpose, we will be looking at pastoral theology from the standpoint of a pastor's quality of life, pastoral standards, and how to improve the conditions by which pastors serve.

The theoretical foundation will give insight into models of ministry that have been used to solve various areas of pressure for pastors in their day to day dispensation of ministry. From this theological foundation, a new model of ministry will be developed and tested in the context.

Chapter six, Project Analysis will provide the results from the project fieldwork to include the project's methodology, implementation, and concluding thoughts.

Ultimately, the reader of this project will glean the burning passion and zeal of developing a model of ministry that will assist pastors who struggle with the day to day pressures of being faithful to the call of God in their lives.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

I have chosen to use the two churches that I currently pastor, New Shield of Faith Christian Ministries in Atlanta, Georgia and Spread the Word Christian Ministries in College Park, Georgia, as my contextual analysis subjects. The opportunity to pastor two churches (for about two years now) at the same time is not a thought, at least for me that I ever considered. Yet, I recognized that the Lord has placed me in this context and I am committed to leading and serving them from the best vantage point that I can offer.

Interestingly, I have experienced a couple of similar attributes. First and foremost, they both love the Lord. Also, they both seem willing to follow as I lead (at least up to now) and have honored me as their shepherd with little or no fuss at all. Although, there are some slight similarities in the demographic makeup of the two different communities where the churches are located, the needs of the people who actual live in these communities are a mirror reflection of one another.

In contrast, they both require a different leadership style from me. It is like parenting five children, which I do have, and recognizing that their personality differences and styles brings both joy and tension that overall is good for the family dynamic to strive. It is important that my children get from me what they need to grow and develop in a balanced and realistic way. Likewise, in general, this is how I view the two churches. It is my desire to lead them in ways that meet their needs as well as the needs of the

communities where they are established, while addressing the issues that seem to stifle their ability and capacities to grow as gracefully as possible to the next levels.

More specifically, in my contextual analysis, I made a few contrasting observations of the two churches: First, I have been the pastor at New Shield of Faith for nine years. It is located at 211 Boykin Street in South West Atlanta close to the downtown Atlanta and the state capitol as well as other major governmental structures. It is housed in a 6000 square foot building with an attached fellowship hall that seats about fifty people comfortably. This assembly of believers has approximately 250-300 people on the church's roster. The makeup of this church's membership consists mostly of youth and middle-aged members. There are only about ten or so members who are over sixty years old.

I have been the pastor at Spread the Word Christian Ministries for close to two years. It is located at 4626 Washington Road, College Park, Georgia in what was formerly a mixed-use strip mall. The church is housed on 4.5 acres of land covering 24,000 square feet. Its church membership roster consists of about 600 members with at least 300-400 in an active status. Of particular note, unlike with NSOF its seniors of sixty years and older carries the base of the church attendees. The next major group is the fifty to fifty-five years of age followed by the children twelve and under. The youth age group seems to have dwindled especially since the majority of them who were active have gone on to college.

Second, NSOF's historical beginnings took the traditional route of church establishment; it was conceived during a Saturday evening Bible study hosted by the

Reverend Ron B. Cook, Sr. in the home of his parents, Reverend Bonnie and Mother Evelyn Cook. The first Sunday morning worship service was held on November 5, 1995 at the Holiday Inn Northlake at La Vista Road with four new members joining the ministry. NSOF moved into a storefront location at 3433 Covington Drive, Covington Square Shopping Center, in February of 1996.

On Sunday July 6, 1997, NSOF marched into its new edifice located at its current location. While its sister church, STW was given the approval to be established by Bishop Cecil Bishop of the Georgia Conference for the AME Zion Church on December 28, 1988 when he instructed Charles H. Jackson at the age of nineteen to start a new church in Metro-Atlanta area. The church was officially named, New Life AME Zion Georgia, on February 19, 1989. Then later in 1999, the church, under Pastor Jackson received an honorable withdrawal from Bishop Johnson of the AME Zion Church and officially separated and moved to a number of temporary locations before moving in July 2002 to its current spot.

Third, the community where NSOF is located is in one of the most under-served communities in the Atlanta area. It is known as the Pittsburg community. Pittsburgh was founded in 1883 as a black working-class suburb alongside the Pegram rail shops. It was named Pittsburgh because the industrial area reminded people of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and its famous steel mills.

This area of land known as Pittsburgh sits at the southern outskirts of Atlanta in the early 1880s when houses began to be built there. Owned by white real-estate investor, H. L. Wilson, it had many similarities to neighboring Mechanicsville, which also grew up

around the Pegram railroad repair shops, but there were substantial differences. In contrast to Pittsburgh, Mechanicsville was racially mixed and included some well-to-do areas. A working class, Black community, Pittsburgh was served by four streetcar lines, Washington Street, Pryor Street, Stewart Avenue (now Metropolitan Parkway) and Georgia Avenue (now Ralph David Abernathy Boulevard). In spite of its poverty, early Pittsburgh boasted some well-educated and self-sufficient residents. Until the 1930s, Pittsburgh housed Clark College (a four year degree granting historical Black college); it also contained within its quadrant two theological seminaries. There were Black-owned businesses which sprung up on McDaniel Street. Starting in the 1960s it became possible for better-off blacks to move into previously all-white areas, and many did, even as white flight started towards the suburbs. This led to the depreciation of home values in Pittsburgh and eventually too many abandoned houses.

Pittsburgh's population fell by fifty percent from 7,276 in 1970 to 3,624 in 1990. A population renewal yielded a slight increase in the early 2000s before the crash. In 2012, the population had started to increase again and investment in the community has increased.¹ Currently, the housing situation in that area is mostly boarded up and the revitalization plans from the City of Atlanta seems to have dried and because of the high volumes of crime in this particular area, the process of rebuilding has slowed to zero activity. There are several schools located near the church including an elementary, middle, and high school.

¹ Pittsburgh Quick Facts, accessed August 6, 2016, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/PittsburghCityPennsylvania/PST045216>.

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At STW, the community orientation is quite different. For starters, in April 2003, the city of College Park was named one of Atlanta Magazine's, "Best Places To Call Home," and cited as one of the most exciting communities in the greater metropolitan Atlanta area in which to live. Viewed as a well-established community with an individuality all its own, College Park, located near the Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport, residents and visitors alike note that this revitalized City offers the best of southern hospitality in its city services, local restaurants, lodging accommodations, parks and recreation, and community events."³

Further, College Park is known for its historical landmarks. Its collection consists of homes, monuments, businesses, schools, churches, parks, a cemetery, government buildings, and a railway station. "As of the census of 2000, there were 20,382 people, 7,810 households, and 4,600 families residing in the city. The population density was 2,099.8 people per square mile (810.5/km²). There were 8,351 housing units at an

² Pittsburg Quick Facts.

³ Pittsburg Quick Facts.

average density of 860.3 per square mile (332.1/km²). The racial makeup of the city was 12.39% white, 81.81% African American, 0.17% Native American, 0.61% Asian, 3.33% from other races, and 1.69% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race was 6.86% of the population.⁴ College Park has a rich religious background with various houses of faith for a diverse group of people available. In the NSOF community, there are several houses of worship which are mostly attended by African-Americans.

In terms of the two church operations, NSOF is a more intimate, close knitted family-oriented church. Undoubtedly, it is a church, which hinges on love. Love is the main attraction of the church. In general, the people seem to understand that loving people of all walks of life, every nationality, or ethnic background, no matter what a person has done in their lives is still achievable. While STW functions from a larger platform in terms of size and space, it too, operates from a having a big heart. It has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere that is commented by visitors. Also, STW seems to understand that love in action must be demonstrated at every point of engagement possible from membership care to outreach activities in the community.

NSOF is strong in praise and worship as well as in their outreach efforts. STW is strong in its care for the people and outreach, too. NSOF needs to strengthen its church administration practices. STW administrative context is strong. However, they need to move in praise and worship to a place where they can realize the freedom and power that comes when one is at liberty under the Holy Spirit in a less constrained and restricted manner.

⁴ Pittsburg Quick Facts.

For its size, NSOF ministerial staff is adequate. Yet, STW's ministerial staff will need to be expanded to meet the demanding and sometimes complex needs that come with increase in church membership, which they have significantly experienced for the past two years under my leadership. STW has a strong Seasoned Saints (seniors) ministry, while NSOF does not have the numbers to build at that level of ministry. NSOF has both a strong Youth and Young Adult (13-25) department, while STW lack the numbers in this age and stage to have a strong unit. This group's presence is sorely missed especially since most of the young adults are away at college. Their youth depart will need some attention, too. Right now, the children's ministry has numbers that will eventually support a strong youth department.

In conclusion, both churches have some great things working for them and are in a good place spiritually. While they are both growing every week with an average of two new members a Sunday, they both have room for improvement. My prayer is that they will remain open and become even more flexible to what I suspect they may not be able (at first) to imagine is possible. Since both church communities are in low-income areas of their respective cities, it is expected that their needs would be great and at best complex. As a result, both communities will need the churches to serve as their lighthouses of hope when their natural lights are cut off. Further, they will need to be fed in the natural and spiritually. To do so, both churches must have a strong, unmovable, and yet invigorating presence. Also, being well organized will enable them to tackle a ministry workload with effectiveness providing spiritual guidance, education, and myriad support services to assist the people at their points of need and in their personal growth,

development, and even survivability. Besides, what I stated earlier as my leadership challenges, I would recommend that 1) they look for ways to connect with and build community; 2) they would establish a systematic process whereby they could more adequately document their engagements, ministry work, and progress during each calendar cycle; 3) they would create a plan to conduct more training for all auxiliaries and ministries; and finally 4) they would work together to form working groups that would deliberate on ways to create opportunities to jointly engage in activities and match calendars which would mitigate (as much as possible) competition between one another.

In summary, it is clear to me that there will be multiple variables at play that will certainly influence my ability to lead the two churches far beyond my original metaphorical implication of what it takes to raise five children while respecting their individual personality patterns, talents and abilities. Here with the two churches, I am going to need systematic approaches that will allow me to address established influences and pre-existing themes such as historical frame of references, diversity, population, race, literacy, education, economics, generational differences and access to services. There are other considerations that I believe will need to be considered such as touchy themes that operate around self-worth, balanced esteem, and value of the human spirit that will need full dosages of love and respect.

As I shift to my spiritual autobiographical presentation, I am still a bit overwhelmed at the value that I found in this assignment. It created a (now I see) critical opportunity for me to inspect my life and enabled me to draw conclusions that were both therapeutic and uncomfortable simultaneously. Also, it provided me with a platform to

reflect and frame moments in my narrative that I fondly called God moments. This reflective time helped me to see that my experiences with God were real. Real because there is simply no other explanation that would have taken me to where I was, to where I've been, and to where I am now. To be honest, I naively thought that it was just stuff that happened. But now, I know it was God keeping and preparing me for such a time as this to do his bidding using my own story with its poverty, wealth, hurt, pain, fame and prestige as the backdrop for people to have the kind of experiences with church that are meaningful and life changing. Transformative experiences that leave some people better than they could ever imagine and for others offer a hope that will set them free to get saved, change their lives, and live better.

Further, as I stated in that paper, I now believe that I have been changed by the love and power of Jesus Christ and because I have that truth about myself, I desire to love, lead, guide, and shepherd others to a similar place of contentment and peace. I am a totally different person than even ten years ago. Owing to my spiritual growth, I have seen how much of an impact God has had and continues to have in and over my life. I have learned the true meaning of trusting in God.

Moreover, as I look at the opportunity, a God moment, that is set before me in being the spiritual father of two churches located in two different communities with different strengths and weakness to manage, I am challenged by my need to ensure that I am steady and as well balanced in my approaches and strategies for the implementation of the needed change which I identified. Through my contextual analysis, I determined that I would need to be mindful and cautious about several variables. For example, I must

not compromise the historical identities of the churches. In addition, I must avoid minimizing cultural practices and traditions of each church to the end that people become displaced. Also, I must not disrupt their unique relations with their respective community base, and what I view as my biggest challenge is that I must ensure that the changes implemented will not give the appearance of a back-door approach to making the two churches one. Equally, I am convinced that a flexible leadership style will be pivotal in my success with both churches. Given, the complexities of human nature, as is the case with sibling rivalry, I am going to need to be as a skilled surgeon with my scalpel of love to get to the under belly of the people along with their assumptions and beliefs about how church should function. Once I began this work, I will need to be strong in my commitment to stay focused and on task. Even though, I have pastoral history for one church for nine years and the other for only two, I am confident that they both will respond in a similar manner if I fail at eliminating the possibility of church hurt and confusion due to their lack of trust.

Therefore, based on my spiritual autobiography and contextual analysis, I have decided to develop my Doctoral Ministry project around an examination and study of multiple leadership models and styles that effected change in different environments where the stakes were high, and the change needed was a necessary good for the sake of the church, its people and the community. I imagine not limiting myself to the perspectives of just the church or theological narratives, but to also look at models of other social institutions as well as businesses along with both profit and non-profit entities. Also, I will look at models that succeeded and models that failed.

Finally, I would look at leaders whose vision like Martin Luther King, Jr. required the kind of steadfastness and focused attention that wouldn't quit because the road chosen was not an easy one. My love and care for people will be a necessary carrot for this endeavor. Yet, I am most comfortable here because of the influence of my mother. In my autobiographical analysis, I shared that she was the greatest and most positive influence in my life. She passed away a few years ago. She just did not encourage me, but everyone who came into her presence. She was an inspiration because she demonstrated fortitude and the power to endure and hold on. Caring and loving on people is what she was known for as well what she demonstrated daily. I believe, too, that I take after her in this area. Her treatment of others was kind and gentle without evaluation and/or judgment. She believed as I that given a chance to do so, people would change. It is what I learned as I watched her repeatedly do without to help others. She tried to help whenever there was a need and she did not have a lot to give as far as money was concerned; yet whatever she had she was willing to share. For me giving is a natural part of who I am and caring for others is what I enjoy. This is the part of my ministry besides teaching which brightens up my day.

Besides the influence of my mother, I am blessed to have the full support of my wife and family in ministry. My wife is indisputably my helper in ministry. She not only is the common thread and leader for praise and worship at both churches, but she teaches and preaches, too. My son Jay plays drums at both churches and my daughters serve in numerous capacities as needed. Our ministry is a family affair. Even now, they all continue to stand with me. I know it sounds strange, but they have shaped the way I do

ministry. My early years in ministry began with my family. As I have recounted before, my wife and I were eating out at a restaurant. I remember as if it was just yesterday, it seemed that we had ordered too much food. The leftovers looked like we were on our way intentionally to feed a bunch of other people.

But that was not the case. Sitting there, we agreed that there was no way for us to consume all the left overs within an acceptable period without spoilage. So, we decided to feed some of the local homeless people that I remembered living around the basketball arena where I once played. It changed my family's whole life. That night, we first fed about five people and then the next week came back and fed fifty.

The more we fed people, the more the feeding ministry grew. Because of the growth, we had to turn our living room into our ministry headquarters and food pantry. Moreover, we personally financed the program without taking one dime from the city, county and or state funded resources as well as any funds from non-profit agencies. Also, we refused to allow the local television channels to use the ministry to leverage publicity and/or advertisement even those channels regularly featured acts of kindness stories. The most amazing thing about this time is that our family grew closer and we all looked forward to being together.

As a matter of fact, it was our children who decided to package along with the food, a strip of paper with scripture on it and place it in each container. Amazingly the people whom we served would chase our van down if they discovered that we had not provided them with that Word from God. Even more amazing is the fact that we did this every week for six years and fed well over two thousand homeless citizens. At the height

of our family ministry success, my wife and I decided that we had completed that assignment. Our children had started to become involved in more school activities and we wanted to ensure that the excellence demonstrated when we first began would not be lost and the reputation of our legacy with the family ministry experience would be stamped by us as the best.

The many lessons we learned from those six years have become an invaluable asset for my family and me. We truly learned and experienced that love is the key and that everything done from this vantage point in relating and serving humanity is well worth it. We know that it counts. We found out together that it matters, and we thank God that we were able to be and make a difference in the lives of people. Personally, and even professionally, I have faced people who have gone through some horrific experiences. They have been through drugs, alcohol, abuse, neglect, and loneliness as well as many other things that must be dealt with before they could move forward. I believe that I have an easy to relate to persona and spirit that open doors for people to feel safe to share their positive or negative narratives. I believe I carry a high level of sensitivity to the experiences of others mainly because of my own experiences and challenges.

Further, I believe that people relate to me because I am real. Their joy becomes my joy and their pain my pain. I connect fully with people as their pastor and leader. The love that is flowing through my ministry is genuine. People do know when the love is a fake thing. They might drop in from time to time, but they will not stay. I think I am gifted when it comes to relating well with people from all walks of life. I experienced some real caring people in my life and I always said to myself that I wanted to be like

them. Because I did a lot of ministry on the streets of Atlanta I developed an understanding of the time and effort it takes to service and meet the needs of people who are disenfranchised and disadvantaged. I believe that it takes special anointing to engage in successful outreach ministries and I believe, too, that equal effort is required for reaching in and serving the people who come through the church doors. If only pastors and churches would commit to the people, then I believe we would have the power together to eliminate homelessness and a few other societal maladies. It starts with planting seeds of love. As you can tell, I do nothing without love leading the way. Plus, I believe that I will need to continue following this prescription with the two churches to obtain my expected results by the time this project is completed.

During my eight years in seminary, I have changed my mind about a lot of things about pastoring. It was my seminary experience that gave me the courage and stamina to even consider the viability of me pastoring two churches. I thought about the financial burden that one church could create. As well, I thought about the glaring number of pastors who have decided to leave pastoring mainly because of its financial landscapes. Early on, I could not imagine why that would be the case. But now, I realize that I was not affected because I was not dependent on the church's financial portfolio to sustain me and family. Also, I came to realize that church financial stability for pastors matters and when it is not stable pressure mounts. It can be mind-boggling.

I am asked all the time, how am I able to do it? I simply say because God has called me to do so. Also, I have maintained the same mind set for two churches as for one. I call it Pastoring Without Pressure (PWP). Believe me, it takes great personal

attention to create a balanced church from the spiritual and the administrative aspects in order that both may work together, and the people are able to receive the best of what that church has to offer. In other words, there is a great amount of pressure that is placed on pastors today. For example, the pastor must manage the myriad pressures of taking care of the needs of many members, but also manage his/her own personal financial concerns. If it is a small sized church, then the pastor is expected to take care of everything. In many cases the pastor must have a full-time job and the church becomes the secondary responsibility. I believe that pastoring is a full-time position and obligation. I believe a church suffers without the full leadership of their pastor and not that the pastor is obligated to be at the church for the members every second out of the day, but when a pastor is available full time, then he or she has the advantage of planning, organizing, visiting members, and getting the much-needed rest to keeping things moving. This is going to be a critical aspect for me. I believe that with two churches, I will need to be disciplined, manage my time wisely, and do an awful lot of delegating without being inaccessible to the people and/or unavailable. Again, my choices of leadership models will be critical, and I will need to be wise with my time management.

Of course, environment for change must be conducive. As pastors, we spend an awful lot of time admonishing and encouraging our people to change. Yet, we pay little or no attention at all to the conditions for which we encourage this change to occur. People need a safe and non-judgmental environment. They also need one that is clean, warm, and welcoming. They need to be able to see the possibility of change in the church; places such as the men and women lounges. The kitchen, the foyer entering the

sanctuary, the ground, cut grass, the trees trimmed, the trash picked up on the yard, flowers and shrubbery should be manicured as we announce to the community that someone lives here, and we do care. We simply cannot have broken tables and chairs lined up in the hallways. We must take pride in our property and facilities.

Presently, both churches are vibrant mainstays in their respective communities. In addition, they are both poised to make a significant impact on the lives of the nearby community dwellers. Also, they both have a core group of people who have signed on to help me do the work needed to advance the ministries to the next levels. Both churches have experienced good success with their ministry work, which has mostly been developed in response to the needs of each church, respectively. While the work I need to do will focus on areas to produce stronger members and stronger leaders by re-establishing the trust factor in the people, establishing open access and open communication environments in the churches' practices and policies, the worship experience must maintain and be viewed as non-restrictive. Additionally, my contextual analysis revealed that both churches needed a strong injection of how to treat, handle, understand, and love the people in their communities; without this as a backdrop the members may not view change as a necessary good. To this end, both of my ministries should function and have a heart for the people as I do.

Another challenge for churches today is the struggle with a drive through mentality where most of the church attendees do not live in the community where the church is located. I can see this as a potential issue for both churches and I will need to

keep a careful watch avoiding the appearance of not showing interest and concern for what is occurring in the schools, the local supermarkets, treatment from police, placement of local transportation agencies' bus stops, and even where the counties locate their voting polls. When we are not able to effect change in a physical way, we must be the watchful eye of the community and fill in the gap by providing information and making appropriate referrals. Perhaps, we may need to attend school board and/or local PTA meetings to ensure that the parents who are working are informed about what is going on. At the end of the day, that is what ministry is about for me. We must get involved with the communities where we worship.

Thus, the relationship and interconnectedness with my ministry interest, skills, and the needs of my context has formed the basis for my Doctor of Ministry project. Going forward, I intend to continue my walk with Christ by showing His love, organizing and helping people by way of the church, and loving the people individually. Modeling the principles of unconditional love in practice will be a tool that I will use to help both churches maximize their growth potential. However, we still must be ready to help people at the point of their needs in their everyday living situations.

There are some very depressed areas in the communities in which my churches are located. At NSOF, there is an entire community of low income, drug infested, and high crime areas that surrounds the church. These facts cannot be denied and must be addressed by the church. I am excited (seems strange again) because I trust that it is the Lord who has led me to both churches and I do not take it lightly. In preparation, I have been actively engaged in teaching the members how to properly function where they

worship since a good number of our members have a different zip code than the church and live in other neighborhoods.

At STW, ministry really takes place on one street and as a result is more centralized. Still, the residential area is the same as in the NSOF community; it is filled with low-income residents, transitional apartments, drug infestation, and high crime. The good news is that now, the church is drawing the people from the community. Additionally, a good number of members who had left the church under the former leadership are returning and joining the fellowship again. Also, there are signs that suggest that our efforts are making a difference. While pastoring at NSOF, the people shared with me that coming to the church allowed them to experience a sense of belonging and a spirit of community that had a positive effect on their sense and sensibility of relating to society in general. I believe that this is the reason why the church must always strive to be the beacon of light and hope in our communities. Our roles as churches are yet to be fulfilled. We still have much work to do and many miles to travel before we sleep. I believe my ministry interest and skills have informed my ministerial leadership style because it involves helping people make that kind of connection that leads to Christ and the betterment of one's whole life. The whole life of a person is important, it's not just going to church and praising God, but how well this connection helps in one's daily living experiences. Further, my ministry interest is to continue doing the work that Christ has started in me and to do my part in service to humanity. Specifically, I am interested in increasing the body of believers in the local church and ministering through outreach efforts. I will continue to study the nature of my work,

practice and application of unconditional love for humanity, and continue to examine the life of Martin L. King, Jr. as one of multiple models I will investigate and learn from in the development of a meaningful project that will help me effectively lead my two churches. This is not work that I see for myself but for Christ's sake. He will get the glory. I am just his humble servant. The essential principles by which I live continue to be my faith in God, my love, and respect for humanity in which He created. These principles over the years have not changed much, but rather because of my studies they have been enhanced.

Ministry in the world itself has become social media driven; people are spending more time outside the church than inside. There is a great movement also for people to experience something different than what they have come to expect from the traditional church paradigm. My personal theology is that God is the supreme spiritual being; Jesus Christ is the Son of God and was sent here to save humanity and give everyone the opportunity to accept Him as Lord. My theology is what drives my present ministry and will keep my churches on a path of teaching that is progressive while not forsaking the teachings of Jesus Christ as the cornerstone of the theological thought taught. I have been blessed to experience a great amount of success rather than failures in ministry from the standpoint of participation and commitment from leaders to the lay people. I am proud of that fact. I have been blessed further to learn many things from these ministries and even more delighted in the skills I have acquired to successfully manage the diversity of the human factor that requires a leader to open (sometimes truth bearing with discomfort)

yourself up to lead and work with people while encouraging them to continue to grow in their knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Further, I consider my skill set in ministry important to the body of Christ and to the two local churches which I pastor. The challenges and situation that are problematic to our ministry will have a chance to be worked on and overcome. This process has started in one of the locations and now is being implemented in the other; moving towards a more balanced and effective church with all possibilities ahead. People lives are being changed and their spirits are being lifted. From this review, I look forward to guiding and implementing a few changes to help both local assemblies:

- Initiate a steady, yet balanced growth cycle
- Buildup, enhance, improve, and/or strengthen the people without compromising their relationship with their respective communities
- Create an atmosphere of trust
- Establish and engage in positive approaches that will allow for an intergenerational congregation to worship jointly together

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Tithes and offerings are down, or simply the church is not paying enough for me to make a decent living is the claim of many pastor's today. There are great pressures that come with being a pastor, leading a congregation, helping someone change their lives for the better, preaching and teaching every Sunday, Bible Study, and much more. Moreover, sometimes a pastor's salary will not cover their monthly bills and they are forced to get a full- time job to make their personal life meet up with the pressures of full- time pastoring. Statistically because of the pressures that are put on pastoring today, there are more pastors leaving full- time ministry and finding other means of serving God.

The focus for the pastor should not be on things, rather on the calling that God has place on their lives. Just as the text speaks of various things that occupy our lives, it also warns that worrying cannot add any good thing to our lives. Pastors find themselves occupied with church things and church people who distract them from the work of kingdom building. The text also speaks of those things that are critical for survival; however, the conclusion is still the same. While we worry about these things, God is aware, yet requires our attention to be on the work of ministry and the things of the kingdom as a priority. When we are faithful in meeting the requirements of God, He will provide our increase. Pastors find themselves pastoring with the pressures of life and the

pressures of providing stability and security for themselves and their families. When this occurs, they take their eyes from the things of God, reducing their effectiveness in kingdom building. Pastoring without pressure is a process that aligns with the Word of God in that when the pressures of life are successfully managed, the pastor can concentrate and give all their attention to God and the work of ministry.

While attending a well-known Black seminary, I encountered many fellow students struggling to stay in school and at the same time make ends meet. Many of them shared with me over lunch and during class that it was hard for them to create a healthy atmosphere of studying the word of God because they had so much other stuff they had to deal with in their lives. For the most part, most of my classmates were there just to graduate and get a pastoring position and hopefully that would help them survive their financial situations. Surprisingly, the sad thing about it, a lot of them were so financially stricken that on most occasions, I picked up the tab for lunch and these classmates were already in a pastoring assignment.

Pastors today are faced with more work, more problems, and more stress than any other time in the history of the church. This is taking a frightening toll on the ministry, shown by the statistics below:

- Fifteen hundred pastors leave the ministry each month due to moral failure, spiritual burnout or contention in their churches
- Four thousand new churches begin each year, but over seven thousand churches close
- Fifty percent of pastors' marriages will end in divorce

- Eighty percent of pastors and eighty-four percent of their spouses feel unqualified and discouraged in their role as pastors
- Fifty percent of pastors are so discouraged that they would leave the ministry if they could, but have no other way of making a living
- Eighty percent of seminary and Bible school graduates who enter the ministry will leave the ministry within the first five years
- Ninety percent of pastors said their seminary or Bible school training did only a fair to poor job preparing them for ministry
- Eighty-five percent of pastors said their greatest problem is they are sick and tired of dealing with problem people, such as disgruntled elders, deacons, worship leaders, worship teams, board members, and associate pastors
- Ninety percent said the hardest thing about ministry is dealing with uncooperative people
- Seventy percent of pastors feel grossly underpaid
- Ninety percent said the ministry was completely different than what they thought it would be before they entered the ministry
- Seventy percent felt God called them to pastoral ministry before their ministry began, but after three years of ministry, only fifty percent still felt called¹

This biblical foundation section will focus on the advantages of pastoring without some of the pressures that pastors experience in church today. What would pastoring be like without having to worry about what you are going to eat and where you are going to sleep etc.? What would the church look like with a full-time pastor and teacher? How much healthier would the congregation be with a pastor that is available, healthy, and cares about what his or her congregation deals with daily.

¹ Life-Line for Pastors, accessed February 12, 2016, <http://www.MaranathaLife.com>.

To address the issues mentioned, we will be investigate Old Testament scripture first from the book of Leviticus 25:8-10 and second New Testament scripture found in the book of Matthew 6: 25-34 and some sections of Matthew, Chapter 25.

Old Testament

Leviticus 25:8-10 states:

You shall count off seven weeks of years, seven times seven years, so that the period of seven weeks of years gives forty-nine years. Then you shall have the trumpet sounded loud; on the tenth day of the seventh month—on the day of atonement—you shall have the trumpet sounded throughout all your land. And you shall hallow the fiftieth year and you shall proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you: you shall return, every one of you, to your property and every one of you to your family.²

Most scholars believe Moses is the author of Leviticus, written between 1450 B.C. and 1410 B.C. Leviticus takes its name from one of the twelve tribes of Israel, the Levites, from whose ranks came the priests that served in the tabernacle. We will take a deeper look at the overall theme of Leviticus and especially the twenty-fifth chapter and how it relates to the Israelites problems and issues momentarily. Between the twenty-third and the twenty-fifth chapters is where we will focus on God's ceremonial laws concerning purification and God's laws regarding the sacred feasts and festivals, tithes, offerings, sabbatical and jubilee years, vows, and more. But more importantly it is in the Jubilee years that we will find the answer to what God is saying about the treatment of pastors and what should be done.

² Leviticus 25:8-10, New Revised Standard Version. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this document are from the NRSV.

In the Septuagint (The Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament), the third book of the Pentateuch is called Lavation (pertaining to the Levites), which is an adjective that modifies the wordbook. The Levites were the tribe in Israel from which the priests and others prominent in the worship services were chosen, in place of the firstborn sons of all the tribes (Nm 3:45). Leviticus plays a very important and essential role in the Pentateuch.³

The book of Leviticus begins talking about the rites of Jewish liturgy. It contains certain laws about worship, rules, and customs on ceremonies in consecrations and sacrificial offerings. Behind the various offerings lies a deep conviction that God is the Lord of all creations. The laws pertaining to religious observances are generally divided into the following parts:

- Rituals concerning Sacrifices
- The ordaining of the priests
- The laws regarding Legal Purity
- The laws of Holiness
- Vows
- Tithes⁴

In the twenty-fifth chapter of Leviticus, it goes into the Sabbath of the seventh year or in other words the fiftieth year of Jubilee.

The LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying: ² Speak to the people of Israel and say to them: When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a Sabbath for the LORD (Lev 25:1-2).

³ Bible History, “The Book of Leviticus,” accessed March 8, 2016, <http://www.bible-history.com/old-testament/bookofleviticus.html>.

⁴ Bible History, “The Book of Leviticus.”

At the time of the text, God told Moses to tell the children of Israel about the law explaining that each seventh year there is to be a land Sabbath. The people were alright to sow and harvest their crops, but on the seventh year there must be a year of rest for the land. There should be no sowing or harvesting of the land but if something should grow, then it could be used for food by the famers or the poor. Here it's important that any debts incurred by the poor during the previous six years were to be canceled at the end of the seventh year.

Deuteronomy 15:1-11 says:

Every seventh year you shall grant a remission of debts. And this is the manner of the remission: every creditor shall remit the claim that is held against a neighbor, not exacting it of a neighbor who is a member of the community, because the Lord's remission has been proclaimed. Of a foreigner you may exact it, but you must remit your claim on whatever any member of your community owes you. There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the Lord is sure to bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession to occupy, if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today. When the Lord your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you. If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, "The seventh year, the year of remission, is near," and therefore view your needy neighbor with hostility and give nothing; your neighbor might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt. Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.

Based on the cycle of working six out of seven days, Israel was to work for six years and then rest during the seventh year, the sabbatical, when no fields were to be

sown and no full-scale reaping was to occur. Both people and animals were to eat of what grew in the fields. Everyone was to rest, Israelites and their servants as well as their livestock. Later legislation also specified that all debts were to be remitted and debtors released during the sabbatical (Dt 15:1–3). Only non-Israelites who did not subscribe to the covenant had to pay their debts if they came due on the sabbatical.⁵

Jubilee

The second unique piece of legislation regulated the year of Jubilee, which occurred every fiftieth year; in a cycle of forty-nine years, it followed the sabbatical year. People enjoyed a sabbatical on the forty-ninth year of the Jubilee cycle and had the fiftieth year for rest as well. When the trumpet blew, closing the Day of Atonement of the forty-ninth year, the year of Jubilee began when there was liberty throughout the land (v. 10). At this time, all lands reverted to their original owners. If a family desperately needed money during the Jubilee cycle, it could sell land to a countryman. Land, however, was never sold because it belonged to God who was the Landlord. Only the crop value of the land was sold until the next year of Jubilee. Those with means were to buy the crop value and not take advantage of the family who desperately needed money. And yet, the family who had to sell the use of the land never lost it entirely, because in the next year of Jubilee, the land reverted to them.⁶ God promised Israel an abundant crop before the seventh sabbatical or forty-ninth year to tide them over for three years

⁵ Louis Goldberg, “Leviticus,” in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, vol. 3, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1995), 82–83.

⁶ Goldberg, “Leviticus,” in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, 82–83.

until the next harvest time. When God made his covenant with Israel, he demanded justice. While poverty could not be eliminated entirely, everyone could begin anew in the year of Jubilee. Moses carefully prescribed procedures for helping others in need. When a farmer and his family were in need, the nearest relative able to help his kin was to redeem or buy his crop's value until the next Jubilee. The family who prospered was to help others who were in desperate straits. When a poor family recovered sufficiently, they could redeem their land, which meant paying back the crop value, but only for the period from the time of redemption until the next year of Jubilee. The person or family who had bought the original crop value had to release it.⁷

If a poor family was not able to redeem its property, they repossessed their land in the Jubilee, as already explained. Reclamation of land prevented the build-up of landed estates, whereby the few would become rich while most people became increasingly poor. A person in desperate need could also sell his house, but the purchaser did not have full title to the house until one full year had elapsed after its sale. Opportunity was given for the seller to redeem it if he could acquire sufficient money to do so. If the original owner could not buy back his house within the year, then the purchaser received full title to it. The Levites lived in cities and on parcels of land surrounding those cities, scattered among the twelve tribes, but they did not own land as other tribes. If a Levite sold a house when he desperately needed money, he always had the right to redeem it; if he could not before the Jubilee year, the house reverted to him at that time. Pasturelands

⁷ Goldberg, "Leviticus," in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, 82–83.

could never be sold because these possessions were all they had.⁸ While the covenant law attempted to equalize everybody's economic standing, it could not prevent poverty in every case. When individuals fell upon hard times and were unable to support themselves even after selling the crop value of their land, special provisions were made. When poor people needed additional loans, interest was never to be taken from them, and no food was to be sold to them for profit. A poor person could hire himself out to a rich person who then had to care for him; the poor person, however, was not to be treated as a slave, but rather, as a hired worker or temporary resident until the next year of Jubilee.

Normally, such individuals were to be freed in the seventh year of their service (Ex 21:2; Dt 15:12), but if the Jubilee came first, then their release came sooner. The poor and possibly their children could then regain the land of their fathers. Only non-Israelites could be treated as slaves, although the Law forbade harsh treatment. Any member of a family with means was encouraged to redeem the land of a poor relative and thereby allow him to return to it and make his own living. The attempt was made, as much as possible, to alleviate the plight of the poor while giving them some sense of dignity.⁹

Jubilee and the Gospels

In many ways, Jubilee became the answer to many important purposes that helped to clarify and typify the Gospel. Under close scrutiny one can observe a very strict agreement between Jubilee and the gospels. In the time and manner of their proclamation—the jubilee was proclaimed with the sound of trumpets. Because Jubilee

⁸ Goldberg, "Leviticus," in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, 82–83.

⁹ Goldberg, "Leviticus," in *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, 82–83.

was associated with a reverse in fortune, its intent was to produce a change in the way people value things and avoid at all cost the tendency to sink into the lowest state of misery. To prevent this, God instituted the sounding of the trumpets throughout the land to alert the people of the beginning of the year of Jubilee. When the trumpet was heard, it was thought that the people's spirits would become excited, as every individual would be given the opportunity to reclaim possessions that were lost.¹⁰ The precise time, on which this sacred year commenced, was the Day of Atonement. The Day of Atonement was the most solemn season in the whole year: the people were required to afflict their souls for sin; and peculiar sacrifices were to be offered for the iniquities of the whole nation. It should seem at first sight that this was an unfit season for the proclamation of such joyful tidings; but it was indeed the fittest season in the whole year; for, when could masters and creditors be so properly called upon to exercise mercy, as when they themselves had been obtaining mercy at the hands of a reconciled God. Or when could debtors and slaves so reasonably be expected to receive their liberties with gratitude, and improve them with care, as when they had been bewailing the sins, which, in all probability, had deprived them of them?¹¹

The Gospel also is to be publicly proclaimed in every place. One would have imagined that it were quite sufficient for God once to make known the way in which he would pardon sinners, and that from that time every sinner would of his own accord exert

¹⁰ Charles, Simeon, *Horace Homiletics: Genesis to Leviticus*, vol.1 (London, UK: Samuel Holdsworth, 1836).

¹¹ Simeon, *Horace Homiletics: Genesis to Leviticus*.

himself to obtain the proffered mercy. But experience proves that our bereavement of heaven is not felt as any evil; our bondage to sin is not at all lamented; and, if no means were used to awaken men's attention to their misery, and to stir them up to embrace the blessings of salvation, the greater part of mankind would rest satisfied with their state, till the opportunity for improving it was irrevocably lost. God therefore sends forth his servants to preach the Gospel to every creature, and commands them to lift up their voice as a trumpet.¹²

This too has its origin in the great atonement. If, as some contend, the year of our Lord's death was the year of Jubilee, the coincidence was indeed very singular and important. But, however this might be, certain it is, that, "without shedding of blood, there could be no remission;" nor, till our Lord had expiated the sins of the whole world, could the Gospel be universally proclaimed. But no sooner was his sacrifice offered, then God was reconciled to his guilty creatures; and from that time must the commission given to his Apostles be dated. A very few days had elapsed, when they sounded the Gospel trumpet in the ears of that very people who had crucified the Lord of glory; and had the happiness to find thousands at a time "brought from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Thus, clearly was the connection marked between the atoning sacrifice of Christ, and the deliverance of sinners that was purchased by the atonement.¹³

¹² Simeon, *Horace Homiletics: Genesis to Leviticus*.

¹³ Simeon, *Horace Homiletics: Genesis to Leviticus*.

Economic Freedom and Liberation

According to C. René Padilla, the scriptural understanding of the field of economics cannot be taken for granted in today's contemporary society. In fact, scripture has something to say to us about wealth and its distribution, provided we are willing to accept the exegetical reality of the text.¹⁴

In Leviticus 25 is the well-known chapter in which the laws regarding the Year of Jubilee are defined. Even to the uninitiated reader the centrality of economic issues in this biblical passage is obvious. But of what use to us are these Jubilee laws, designed for the rural lifestyle of a people that lived thousands of years ago? The question becomes even more complicated when we consider that, according to accepted scholarly opinion, there is no evidence that the Jubilee was ever put into practice.¹⁵ If the Israelites did not put Jubilee into practice, what then is the basis for modern society to observe these laws of antiquity? In today's society, there is nothing more urgent than an ethical revolution that takes seriously the very values represented by the laws of Jubilee. Capital has become the determining factor not only in the field of economics, but also in practically every area of human life. "Under the tyranny of Mammon, king and master of the global economic system, millions and millions of people in every part of the world live submerged in misery. In spite of this fact, it is claimed that this perverse system is the only one possible and that the very suggestion of another alternative is not realistic."¹⁶ With these truisms

¹⁴ C. René Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee in Today's World (Leviticus 25)," *Mission Studies* 13, no. 1-2 (1996): 12, accessed April 20, 2017, ATLASerials, Religion Collection, EBSCOhost.

¹⁵ Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 12.

¹⁶ Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 12.

glaring us in the face, it is important to evaluate the biblical basis of Jubilee as a reasonable methodology for balancing the scales of economic injustice in our current society. Padilla's research indicated three reasons the current society should observe the values of Jubilee.

1. God's purpose for humanity and the creation remains unchanged, and one of the essential elements of that purpose is that human relations, including those that have to do with economics, be based on love and justice.
2. The gifts of land to live in and law to live by were intrinsic to the way God shaped Israel to be a model people. There is a paradigmatic relationship between Israel and the rest of humanity.
3. The basic problems that hindered human relationships in biblical times continue to obstruct human relationships today: the abuse of power, the ambition for material gain, and the exploitation of the poor.¹⁷

The Old Testament prophets appealed to Mosaic teachings to criticize the oppressive structures of their times and looked forward to a new world of justice and peace. In line with them, Jesus Christ proclaimed the coming of the Kingdom of God, an era in which the Jubilee prescriptions regarding the remission of debts, the liberation of slaves, and the redistribution of capital would be fulfilled. Today again a return to the ancient teaching is urgently needed in order to witness to God's purpose for economic relations and for human life in general.

God's Concern for the Poor

In selected verses for the biblical foundations places an emphasis on the year of Jubilee, the culmination of the seventh cycle of seven years, or the period of forty-nine

¹⁷ Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 13.

years. The number seven is a sacred number; and seven times seven is even more sacred. Indeed, the Jubilee is a holy or consecrated year. Scholars are not in agreement on the meaning of the word jubilee or the origin of the year of Jubilee, or on the relationship between the seventh sabbatical year and the year of Jubilee.¹⁸

The initiation of the Jubilee is set for the tenth day of the seventh month (Tishri), which is the Day of Atonement (v. 9), the most solemn day of the Israelite calendar. There is thus a suggestion of the close relationship between sin and inequality, and between liberation from sin and liberation from economic slavery. Among God's people it is impossible to experience God's forgiveness, which is liberation from the guilt of sin, and at the same time to consider oneself exonerated from the responsibility of liberating those who are suffering socioeconomic oppression. The renewal of spiritual life is inseparable from the renewal of creation itself, because human beings are inseparable from creation.¹⁹

At the outset of the Jubilee, the heralds' horns can be heard proclaiming "liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants" (v. 10). The year of Jubilee is mainly that: a year of liberation in which slaves regain their freedom, debts are cancelled, and poor families recover their property and their sense of family unity. It is a year of radical transformation of the structures of oppression, a year of liberation and restoration. In the instructions for the sabbatical year in the first section of our passage, as we have seen, God's concern for the earth is emphasized; in the instructions for the year of Jubilee, in

¹⁸ Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 16.

¹⁹ Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 16.

the second section, the emphasis falls on God's concern for the poor. The entire passage demonstrates, then, that there is no place for merely environmental ecology that focuses on problems of the natural environment but ignores human beings. There is a place only for holistic ecology that considers every aspect of human life in its relationship with nature. Boff and Elizondo point out the relevance of this perspective when they write: "Today, nature's most threatened creatures are not whales or the giant pandas of China, but the poor of the world, condemned to die of hunger and disease before their time."²⁰

Padilla believes that the heart of Jubilee is in the divine demand for equality for all. Because of the initial distribution of the land to the tribes of Israel during the conquest period based on the number and size of the clans and families in each tribe (cf. Nm 26:52-56; Jos 13-19), it stands to reason that human life has always has an economic and communitarian basis. However, because certain inequities occurred in the initial distribution of the land, measures were taken to correct these inequities and inequalities to bring the distribution and the socioeconomic equality that God desires. As Hartley aptly affirms, "the goal of Jubilee was to maintain the solidarity of the various clans in Israel by keeping alive the ideal of the equality of all Israelite citizens under the covenant."²¹ Because God is concerned about the poor, it stands to reason that the year of Jubilee is the year of liberation. Liberation in this context is the recuperation of land that was lost, which is the basis of economic and communitarian.

²⁰ Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 16.

²¹ Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 16-17.

During the year of Jubilee, everyone gets to live and behave like human beings according to God's purpose. As opposed to being viewed an act of generosity on the part of the powerful, it becomes a blessing from God based on his God's law. Today more than ever, God's people must recover their mission as heralds who proclaim liberty throughout the land to all its inhabitants (v. 10). "Liberty in the capitalist world is essentially the liberty of the free market: the liberty of the invisible hand that organizes the economy in agreement with the interests of the rich. In contrast to this type of liberty instituted by the system of death, the God of life who spoke on Mount Sinai calls us to be free and to proclaim liberty to the captives because he is the God who has heard the cry of the poor."²²

Jubilee based on this review and analysis is more than a year of canceling debts and the restoration of property. Jubilee represents God's expressed intent for all of humanity to have economic stability and communal equality in all areas of life. God has made it possible for people to have abundance, however, in attaining that abundance, God is equally concerned about the plight of the poor and those who have less. For these reasons, this particular passage is critical to PWP and its attempt to provide equitable wages for pastors who have been called to serve God by building up God's kingdom without the threat or fear of financial ruin. Next, we will look at the New Testament and the gospel account of Matthew and God's desire for people to trust that he will provide for their every need.

²² Padilla, "The Relevance of the Jubilee," 17.

New Testament

The New Testament scripture found in the book of Matthew 6: 25-34 states:

Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore, do not worry, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed, your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. “So, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring worries of its own. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

Passage Overview

In this passage of scripture Jesus' message picks up his earlier discussion of secret charity (6:1–4). If many prosperity preachers err in urging Christians to seek material gain (see vv. 19–24), many of us err by doubting God's power to provide. Yet in this passage while Jesus emphasizes God's power, he also stresses that God guarantees only what we need. If God sustains life and protects our bodies, will we complain if he does it differently from the ways our culture values (v. 25)? If he feeds us like the birds (v. 26; compare 1 Kings 17:6) or clothes us like the flowers (v. 28), he will have provided us more than what our culture values, not less (v. 29). Yet if God provides for birds and

flowers, he will also provide for us (v. 30).²³ God promises the basics. This theme is important to the passage (vv. 25–26, 28–30). Jesus twice uses a standard type of Jewish argument traditionally called qalwahomer—“how much more?” (vv. 26, 30). If God cares for birds and for perishable flowers, how much more for his own beloved children (compare vv. 8, 32)?²⁴ We generally expect biologists today to examine and classify data without making many ethical or theological pronouncements. But ancient naturalists were sometimes also sages who regarded all God’s creation as a legitimate field for inquiry. Wisdom sayings often addressed nature (for example, 1 Kgs 4:33).²⁵

Jesus draws a lesson from God’s care for birds and flowers (Mt 6:26, 30). Some other Jewish teachers also recognized that God provides for creatures and that people are worth much more than birds. Jesus, who regards God’s original creation purpose as still valid (Mt 19:4–6), believes that the God who cares for unemployed animals will care still more for his children, regardless of their economic situation. People in Jesus’ day considered their cloaks essential, and the law in fact took this for granted (Ex 22:26–27). Paul (less given to hyperbole than his Palestinian Master) declares that Christians need nothing more than food and clothing (1Tm 6:8). But Jesus declares that God can provide for us adequately even if we lack clothing (Mt 6:25). He then goes on to assure us that God will supply covering for our bodies, pointing to the splendor of the fields, whose

²³ Craig S. Keener, “Matthew,” *The IVP New Testament Commentary Series*, vol. 1 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997).

²⁴ Keener, “Matthew,” 228.

²⁵ Keener, “Matthew,” 231.

vegetation is nevertheless used as fuel for baking bread. Solomon's splendor had become proverbial, but it remained minuscule compared to the splendor of God's creation (compare Ps 8:1–9). In the end, wealth does not matter, but God will supply what we genuinely need.²⁶

Jesus again shames his hearers by reminding them that even Gentiles seek material things. Pagans seek their own needs (Mt 6:31–32); God's children should seek instead God's agendas, assured that God will also care for them in the process (6:33). Even in Jesus' model prayer, disciples seek God's kingdom first (vv. 9–10). Faith is not an intricate ritual to get what we want for ourselves; faith is obeying God's will with the assurance that he will ultimately fulfill for us what is in our best interests. That kind of faith grows only in the context of an intimate relationship of love between the heavenly Father and his children.²⁷

Some people today associate faith with being able to obtain possessions from God, but Jesus did not associate it with seeking basic needs from God. Pagans seek those things, he warned (v. 32; compare 5:47; 6:7); we should seek instead God's kingdom and his righteous will (6:33). It is when his people care for others in need among them that God supplies the needs of his people as a whole, perhaps because then he can best trust them to use his gifts righteously (Dt 15:1–11). In our lifelong plans and each day as decide what to do with our life and resources, we have fresh opportunities to prove to

²⁶ Keener, "Matthew," 236.

²⁷ Keener, "Matthew," 237.

God our love for him—or our lack of it.²⁸ Anxiety does us no good. Jesus highlights this theme in Matthew 6:26, 34. Anxiety will not add even the smallest unit of time to one's life. Not only is it true that we cannot extend our life by worrying, but daily experience in our comparatively fast-paced culture confirms the wisdom of an earlier Jewish sage, who observed that worry and a troubled heart actually shorten life. If much study is wearying to the flesh (Eccl 12:12—undoubtedly many a scholar's favorite verse), worry about wealth also banishes sleep and destroys the flesh.²⁹ Unlike some ancient philosophers, Jesus never condemns people for recognizing their basic needs; their Father knows they need food and clothing. Yet, he calls them to depend on God for their daily sustenance. Those who can trust their heavenly Father to care for them (as most first-century Jewish children could depend on their earthly fathers) need not be anxious concerning clothes or food.³⁰

Jesus paints this point by his use of graphic word pictures. Like a typical sage, he finally notes that one has enough to worry about for the day without adding tomorrow's worries (Mt 6:34; compare Prv 27:1). Employing the typical rhetorical technique of personification, Jesus further admonishes his hearers to let tomorrow worry about itself. Yet when Jesus forbids us to worry about tomorrow, this does not mean that concerns will never press upon us. It means instead that we should express dependence on God in each of these concerns. We should pray for our genuine needs (v. 11), provided we pray

²⁸ Keener, “Matthew,” 237.

²⁹ Keener, “Matthew,” 238.

³⁰ Keener, “Matthew,” 238.

for God's kingdom most of all (vv. 9–10; most of Paul's concerns fit this category: 2 Cor 11:28; 1 Thes 3:1–5). The part of the future we must concern ourselves with and work toward is what he has revealed to us and called us to do (compare Mt 10:5–25).³¹

Exegesis

For this reason, I say to you, stop being anxious for your life—what you will eat or what you will drink, nor even with what you will clothe your body. Life is more than nourishment and the body more than clothing, aren't they? (Mt 6:25–29)

Verse 25 introduces the second major section of this passage (vv. 25–34). The inferential connective δια τοῦτο demonstrates that here begin the logical implications of serving God rather than mammon (v 24). The command, which forms the central thrust of the entire paragraph, comes right at the outset—do not worry over basic provisions for life, such as food, drink, and clothing. The reason is because true (spiritual) life far transcends these bodily needs. The contrast between earthly and heavenly treasures continues. The command not to worry is again appropriately understood as a command to stop an action in progress. The KJV translation "take no thought" is inaccurate and misleading. As the example of the birds (v 26) will highlight, Jesus is not precluding planning or working to provide for oneself. The basic meaning of μεριμνάω is "to have an anxious concern, based on apprehension about possible danger or misfortune. If we really trust God, we will not worry. The most we can lose is our physical lives, but our

³¹ Keener, "Matthew," 242.

eternal lives, which make all the suffering or deprivation of this present age pale into insignificance (Rom 8:18), will re- main secure.³²

Consider the birds of heaven: they neither sow nor harvest nor gather into barns, and your heavenly father nourishes them. You matter more than they, don't you? Moreover, which of you by being anxious can add the smallest amount to one's age? And why are you anxious concerning clothing? Learn from the flowers of the field, how they grow: they neither labor nor spin. Yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was being clothed as one of these. Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, even though it exists today, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more you of little faith? (Mt 26-36).

Jesus further explains why his people can dare to be so free from worry.

Conceptually, he gives four reasons: worry is unnecessary (v 26), it is useless (v 27), it is blind (w 28-29), and it demonstrates a lack of faith (v 30). Grammatically, however, these verses comprise three illustrations—one about birds (v 26), one about human lifespan (v 27) and one about plants (w 28-30a). Verses 26b and 30b spell out the point of the first and third of these illustrations; the logic is from the lesser to the greater. If God cares this much for birds and plants, how much more will he not care for his own people? In fact, verse 26 and 28-30 parallels each other closely. Each begins with a command to consider an example from the world of nature, comments on the relative powerlessness of the plant and animal world, reminds us nevertheless of God's concern for them, and concludes with a rhetorical question underlining the greater value of human life.

Verse 26 makes the point concerning nourishment (combining the concerns of what to eat and drink); concerning clothing.³³

³² Craig L. Blomberg, *The New American Commentary -Matthew* vol. 22 (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing, 1992), 251.

³³ Blomberg, *The New American Commentary*, 251.

The examples of birds and vegetation parallel each other, too, because each is wild. Domestic animals and cultivated plants do not need to rely as directly on God as do their counterparts in the wild. The contrast with humans is thus heightened; God takes care even of those forms of life whose existence is most fragile and tenuous. Birds differ from plants; however, in that they do work industriously to find food, build nests, and provide for themselves, even if they cannot entirely imitate human agricultural practices.

As noted above, Jesus is not enjoining a lackadaisical, lazy, or carefree attitude toward provisions. Still, wild fowl depend considerably on the vagaries of nature, over which God rules, reminding Christians that they dare not try to secure their lives against every conceivable calamity. Such foolproof security does not exist in this life; those who nevertheless pursue it will be consumed in the process and unable to serve God.³⁴ Verse 27 gives a slightly different kind of reason for not being anxious. Not only does worry fail to recognize God's great love for us, it simply does not work. At best it accomplishes nothing; at worst it actually shortens our lives, as modern medicine recognizes. The phrase *έπι την ήλικίαν αύτοῦ πήχυν ενα* is somewhat ambiguous. Πήχυς normally means a "cubit" (about 18 inches), while ηλικία can mean either a length of time or unit of size. The more natural rendering of the Greek would be "one cubit to one's height." But to add this amount would scarcely be the trifling quantity apparently demanded by the context. Although the terms are less commonly used this way, the better translation remains "the smallest amount to one's age" (cf. NIV- "a single hour to his life").³⁵

³⁴ Blomberg, The New American Commentary, 252.

³⁵ Blomberg, The New American Commentary, 253.

Verses 28-30 are substantially longer than their parallel in verse 26 because of Jesus' additional reference to Solomon. Instead of a simple comparison between plants and humans, Jesus sets up a three-stage argument. First, he points out God's care for the wild flowers or grasses, despite their relative impotence and evanescence. But instead of moving immediately to God's greater concern for humans, he next marvels at the beauty of these flowers, which he believes surpasses that of the one king in Israel's history most famed for his splendor and earthly glories. So, if the flowers are that much more wonderfully clothed than Solomon, and if we are that much more cared for than the flowers, then God loves those in Christ in certain ways inestimably more than even the greatest of Old Testament believers. This is a recurrent theme in Matthew (cf. esp. 11:11) and drives home the point about our ability and need to entrust our anxieties to God that much more forcefully.³⁶

Therefore, do not be anxious, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "With what shall we be clothed?" For the pagans seek all these things. And your heavenly father knows that you need all these things (Mt 6:31-32).

Jesus now repeats the original command of verse 25 with a simple aorist imperative, envisioning again the same three concerns, this time by means of hypothetical direct quotations—three deliberative questions people might ask themselves. Again, he supplies a rationale for his command by appealing to a *fortiori* argument. This time the comparison is not between humans and other life forms, but between God's people and the pagans. Τα ἔθνη in Matthew, as in the New Testament more generally, normally

³⁶ Blomberg, The New American Commentary, 254.

means Gentiles or nations (people groups), but here it must refer to those who are neither Jews nor Jesus' disciples—those who do not have a direct personal knowledge of God through his special revelation. Anxiety for basic provisions of life often characterized ancient pagan religions, not least in the Greco-Roman empire, and hence necessitated regular rituals to placate whimsical deities in charge of nature. Surely those who know the one true living God ought to act far differently. They will know that God is aware of their needs and intends to take care of them.³⁷

“But seek first the kingdom of God and its righteousness, and all these things will be added to you” (6:33). Here is the central positive command of verses 25-34. If we are not to worry, what are we to do? Jesus' answer is to pursue the righteous and just priorities of the kingdom of God. Then our physical needs will be looked after. The problem of course is that countless Christians, past and present, have not had this promise fulfilled in their experiences in this life. Not surprisingly, many commentators therefore treat this promise as entirely eschatological and relegate it to the not yet of the already-not yet equation. But a promise limited to heavenly recompense would not necessarily serve as a very effective motivator to eschew worry in the present.³⁸

Interestingly, the only major Lukan deviation from Q in this passage is Luke 12:33, separated by only one verse from the Lukan parallel (v. 31) to our text here. In it, Jesus goes on to command his disciples to sell their goods and give alms. Mark 10:29-30 records presumably the oldest form of a dialogue between Peter and Jesus, in which the

³⁷ Blomberg, *The New American Commentary*, 254.

³⁸ Blomberg, *The New American Commentary*, 255.

latter specifically declares that those who give up family or property for the Lord will receive in return a hundredfold in both categories, not only in the life to come but also in this age. Inasmuch as the hundredfold addition of family must refer to the larger community of disciples, the extra houses or fields must also be those, which belong to fellow believers. Combining Luke 12:33 and Mark 10:29-30 suggests that the correct interpretation of Matthew 6:33 is that Christians should be able to expect to have their physical needs cared for, when their spiritual priorities are correct, because Jesus calls all his followers to share their possessions with other Christians in need. But he is not first of all addressing individual believers but the disciples as a community. If Christian congregations do seek God's kingdom above all else, then by definition they will care for the poor within their midst. As G. Getz puts it bluntly, "Situations occur where people's needs are not met because followers of Christ have not been obedient in applying the principles that God has outlined in His Word."³⁹

"So then do not be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for today is its evil (Mt 5:34). The command with which this paragraph began, and which was repeated in its center, occurs one last time. The second two clauses of the verse guard against idealizing verse 33. That which is bad (*ή κακία*) will continue to characterize this age. But Christians ought not to exacerbate the evil of the fallen world by failing to give generously to those in need. There is also a "one day at a time" mentality here which recalls the petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Give us today our daily bread" (6:11). God promises to satisfy our needs, not our greed.

³⁹ Blomberg, The New American Commentary, 255.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

Pastoral Ministry: A Historical Overview

The term pastoral ministry, in the sense in which it is currently understood, is of recent development in the Catholic Church. In the practical order the term seems closely related to what the French call, “une pastorale d’ensemble.” In its present mode, it is a phenomenon predominantly, though not exclusively, peculiar to the American Church in the Seventies. It seems to hold promise for years to come. The earliest instances of the concept of pastoral in Christian tradition can be traced to the revelation of God as shepherd (pastor) of His people. Thus, following the metaphor of the shepherd both as leader and as companion, the flock is not some unthinking mass or herd but a community capable of response to an authority of devotedness and love. In the Ancient East the role of the pastor was seen as a process of drawing together in unity and of providing care for the young and helpless.¹

In the Old Testament and in terms of the salvation of Israel, the word shepherd is a constant and recurring theme although God is referred to as Shepherd. Nevertheless, the pastoral care of providing understanding, and wisdom, is given by the faithful shepherd, who continues to direct his flock toward the day of the coming of the Messiah.²

¹ Agnes Cunningham, “Pastoral Ministry: Overview and Perspective,” accessed March 3, 2017, <http://www.womenpriests.org/classic2/cunning.asp>.

² Cunningham, “Pastoral Ministry: Overview and Perspective”, 65.

Just as God is the Shepherd of the Old Testament, Jesus is the Good Shepherd of the New Testament and as the good Shepherd, he leads his flock with care and mercy besides the still waters. As the Good Shepherd, Jesus carries out the prophecy of the Old Testament according to the prophets and institutes for certain of his followers a pastoral office in the believing community. Following this commission, the lost sheep is to be sought and found and the entire flock is to be served from the heart. In the gospel according to John, where the Shepherd metaphor is most fully developed, there are clearly Eucharistic overtones to the pastoral care of those who are to be nourished and fed as they are brought together in unity.³

Historically, the role of the pastor has developed in the Christian Church in terms of a ministry of care for the believing community. While an over-emphasis of the metaphor has brought about rejection of the idea of the people of God as a flock of sheep, there remains a deep-lying conviction that some members of the ekklesia are called and gifted to be pastors for a work of ministerial service and pastoral care. The terms pastor/pastoral and minister/ministry have evolved together. This does not imply that a new concept of pastoral ministry has necessarily emerged in distinction from the separate underlying meanings attached to these words. For example, an attempt to seek out the concept of ministry takes us back to the Old Testament notions of the councilor, the court assistant, and the sacred minister. Angels stand before the throne of Yahweh as ministers. The ebed Yahweh, too, was a servant, hence a minister.⁴

³ Cunningham, “Pastoral Ministry: Overview and Perspective”, 65-66.

⁴ Cunningham, “Pastoral Ministry: Overview and Perspective”, 66.

In the New Testament ministry (diakonia) is understood as service. The office of ministry exists in and for the community Authority to govern is given as a pastoral office in view of salvation. Thus, there is recognition of the relationship between ministry and apostolate. In the Pauline writings, a diversity of ministries is acknowledged as given by the Spirit for the sake of the whole body.⁵

The Early Christian Church 100—476

From its earliest days, the Christian church has moved from simplicity to complexity as it has drifted from a spontaneous living organism to a more settled institution. This ever-dangerous institutionalism arose simultaneously in the second generation of many widely separated churches. No more vivid example exists than that of the second-century church which developed strong ecclesiastical traditions as it came to view the bishop as the successor to the Apostle. This trend progressed into the fourth century, causing the church to enter more and more into an era of "speculation on the law and doctrine of the church." The rise and development of sacerdotalism, with its elevation of clergy to the status of priests, in effect, made the minister an instrument of the saving grace of God as he participated with God in the salvation of human beings. This threefold ministry of bishops, elders, and deacons represented a serious departure from simple New Testament ministry.⁶

⁵ Cunningham, "Pastoral Ministry: Overview and Perspective", 66.

⁶ James F. Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History," *The Master's Seminary Journal* 6, no. 2 (September 1995): 143-180. accessed June 15, 2017, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials, EBSCOhost.

In contrast to this general trend, several strong proponents of biblical ministry existed during this period. Polycarp (c. A.D. 70—A.D. 155/160) wrote,

And the presbyters also must be compassionate, merciful towards all men, turning back the sheep that are gone astray, visiting all the infirm, not neglecting a widow or an orphan or a poor man: but providing always for that which is honorable in the sight of God and of men. . . . Let us therefore so serve Him with fear and all reverence, as He himself gave commandment and the Apostles who preached the Gospel to us and the prophets, who proclaimed beforehand the coming of the Lord.⁷

The spirit here is one of humble and loving service, with no seeming regard for the hierarchical relationship of bishops and elders. Clement of Alexandria (c. A.D. 155—c. A.D. 220) has written in a similar vein, emphasizing that ministers are those who are chosen to serve the Lord, who moderate their passions, who are obedient to superiors, and who teach and care for sheep as a shepherd. He also observed that "bishops, presbyters, deacons . . . are imitations of the angelic glory, and of that economy which, the scriptures say, awaits those who, follow the footsteps of the apostles, having lived in perfection of righteousness according to the Gospel." Origen (c. A.D. 185—c. A.D. 254), his pupil, assigned a similar role to the one representing Christ and his house (the church) and teaching others of these truths. This emphasis contrasts sharply with that of Cyprian (c. A.D. 200—c. A.D. 258), the well-known Bishop of Carthage who apparently limited his discussion of pastoral theology to the elevation of the bishop to the level of an apostle.⁸

⁷ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 152.

⁸ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 153.

The powerful pen of John Chrysostom (c. A.D. 344/354—A.D. 407) contributed significantly to the early church's understanding of the pastoral position. He developed the role and functions of a pastor both in his commentaries on the Pastoral Epistles and in his Treatises. His statements about the nature of ministry are very biblical:

There is but one method and way of healing appointed, after we have gone wrong, and this is, the powerful application of the Word. This is the one instrument, the finest atmosphere. This takes the place of physic, cautery and cutting, and if it be needful to sear and amputate, this is the means which we must use, and if this be of no avail, all else is wasted: with this we both rouse the soul when it sleeps, and reduce it when it is inflamed; with this we cut off excesses, and fill up defects, and perform all manner of other operations which are requisite for the soul's health.⁹

To this Chrysostom adds the necessity of living by example with the ambition that the Word of Christ would dwell in men richly. His statements warm the heart as perhaps the most useful expression of pastoral ministry during the period, but they also reveal signs of the monastic stranglehold fast coming upon the organized church of his day. The monastic understanding of pastoral ministry was soon to have a profound effect upon church leadership.¹⁰

Independent groups are a final source of biblical ministry patterns during this period. As Gunnar Westin points out the process of development, which transformed the original Christian congregations to a sacramental, authoritarian Church took place during the latter portion of the second century. This change did not take place without protest.

⁹ Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 154.

¹⁰ Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 155.

Many church historians have dismissed as heretics those churches that opposed the institutionalized church—a campaign often called The Free Church Movement.

Though some of these groups struggled with doctrinal purity, a closer look reveals that the heretical label in most cases was primarily due to their unwillingness to be loyal to the received tradition of the fathers, not to significant doctrinal weakness. A more thorough investigation of these independents is difficult, because only the works of those who wrote against them have survived, for the most part. So, some sensitivity in examining these writings is necessary. Such groups include the Montanists (c. A.D. 156), Novatians (c. A.D. 250), and Donatists (c. A.D. 313), all of who left the official church of their day to pursue the pure church. An inclusion of these groups in the present discussion is not an attempt to demonstrate their consistent soundness of doctrine, but to point to their common commitment to the gospel and a primitive church with a primitive biblical ministry.¹¹

The Medieval Period 476—1500

The general structure of the western medieval church focused on the authority and celibacy of its clergy. Many leaders had retreated to the ascetic life of the monastery to escape the worldliness of the Christianity of their day. The pattern of authority centered in Rome with the first pope, Gregory the Great (540—604), assuming power in 590.¹²

¹¹ Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 157.

¹² Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 157.

Though Gregory's papacy plunged the church into deeper political involvement and corruption, he also contributed a positive influence on the pastoral ministry of its clergy. In his Book of Pastoral Rule, he addressed many issues, including qualifications and duties of ministers as well as listing thirty types of members with rules of admonition for each. He addressed the poor, the sad, the foolish, the sick, the haughty, the fickle, and many others. This monumental work became a textbook of medieval ministry, yet Gregory's own preoccupation with political implications of the papacy caused him to neglect the souls of men while caring for his estates. The rise of the papacy produced complete corruption as popes, in their devotion to an increasingly pagan agenda, resorted to any available means to reach their goals. The monastic church, now fully developed, experienced tremendous corruption as well. In balance, however, Payne points out,

Though there was widespread spiritual famine in many nominally Christian lands and notorious corruption in high places, the theologians, the mystics and the reformers of the Middle Ages are further evidence of the Holy Spirit within the Church. They came, almost without exception, from the ranks of the clergy.¹³

During the thousand-year period from Nicea to Wycliffe, ministry took place in spite of the church more than because of the official church. Even more than in the early period, biblical ministry occurred among elements of the Free Church, which were and are commonly regarded as heretics (c. 1050). Albigenses (1140), and Waldenses (1180) demonstrated a strong passion for a pure church with biblical ministry. As Bainton notes, these very definitely were not heretics but only schismatic, and schismatics only because [they were] cast out against their will. The Paulicians, in their important manual, *The Key*

¹³ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 158.

of Truth, speak of a simple church built on repentance and faith, and refer to what was learned from the Lord about the church. Good shepherds, whose responsibilities included ruling, shepherding, preaching, caring, and administration of the sacraments, were its leaders. Perhaps the greatest voices for biblical ministry were those of the pre-Reformation reformers. These called for true biblical ministry in a day when such convictions often required men to die for their views.¹⁴

In summary, the Middle Ages, though dominated by a powerful and corrupt institutional church, was a period where many rose up to challenge that body because of their pursuit of the truth. This should encourage present-day servants in their quest to rediscover true pastoral ministry. The effort may be extremely difficult in the face of strong traditions, but it is both necessary and possible.¹⁵

The Reformation Period (1500—1648)

The Protestant Reformation was of great importance in the history of the church and the development of its ministry. Flowing out of late-Medieval piety, mysticism, and scholarship, its focus was upon reforming the existing church according to biblical principles. It was more accurately the Magisterial Reformation, since the reformers retained the mind-set of the magistrate who compelled individuals in matters of faith. This state-church concept contrasted sharply with the free-church thinking of true Anabaptists—distinguished from a larger group of Anabaptists—who attempted to build

¹⁴ Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 158.

¹⁵ Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 158.

a new church based on the Bible. This important difference has led an increasing number of historians to focus on the Radical Reformation as "a major expression of the religious movement of the sixteenth century." Williams identifies this Radical Reformation as the Fourth Reformation in it from Lutheranism, Calvinism, and Anglicanism. Although acknowledging doctrinal differences within the fourth reformation, Williams observes,

Though Anabaptists, Spiritualists, and Evangelical Rationalists differed among themselves as to what constituted the root of faith and order and the ultimate source of divine authority among them. . . all three groups within the Radical Reformation agreed in cutting back to that root and in freeing church and creed of what they regarded as the suffocating growth of ecclesiastical tradition and magisterial prerogative. Precisely this makes theirs a Radical Reformation.¹⁶

In seeking an understanding of the contribution of the Reformation to biblical ministry, one must look to both the magisterial reformers (Luther, Bucer, Calvin, and Knox) and the Free Church (true Anabaptists). The former worked under the banner *óí reformatio* (reformation) while the latter had *restitutio* (restitution) as its banner. Both offer important insight.

An examination of the reforms implemented by Martin Luther (1483—1546) and John Calvin (1509—1564) reveals that they differed in degrees of progress toward the biblical pattern of church ministry. In the final analysis, both maintained a magisterial church-state system, believing that any reformation should ultimately result in a Christian state. The two distinguished between the visible and the invisible church, viewing the invisible as the church made up of the elect only. Their view of the visible church, created by a magisterial church-state, precluded a simple doctrine of church and ministry.

¹⁶ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 163.

The difference between the two men was that Luther tended to retain in the church the traditions not specifically condemned in Scripture and Calvin tended to include only what Scripture taught explicitly about church ministry. This difference is evident in the corresponding traditions of worship emerging from these founders, Lutheranism worship being very embellished and incorporating ritual and the Reformed mind-set reflecting more simple church settings.¹⁷

Martin Bucer (1491-1551), an important disciple of Luther and a teacher of Calvin, had an important ministry in Strasbourg. Tidball rightly calls him the "Pastoral Theologian of the Reformation" because of his extensive works in developing the office and work of the pastor. In his "De Regno Christi", Bucer identified three duties of a pastor: 1) A diligent teacher of the Holy Scriptures; 2) An administrator of the sacraments; and 3) A participator in the discipline of the church. The third duty had three parts: life and manners, penance (involving serious sin), and sacred ceremonies (worship and fasting). A fourth duty was care for the needy. Bucer wrote,

Those pastors and teachers of the churches who want to fulfill their office and keep themselves clean of the blood of those of their flocks who are perishing should not only publicly administer Christian doctrine, but also announce, teach and entreat repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and whatever contributes toward piety, among all who do not reject this doctrine of salvation, even at home and with each one privately. For the faithful ministers of Christ should imitate this their master and chief shepherd of the churches, and seek most lovely themselves whatever has been lost, including the hundredth sheep wandering from the fold, leaving behind the ninety-nine which remain in the Lord's fold (Mt 1&12).¹⁸

¹⁷ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 164.

¹⁸ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 166.

Calvin's contribution to a biblical understanding of pastoral ministry is tremendous. Though often viewed as primarily a theologian and exegete, Calvin was also a pastor and churchman. He devotes the fourth book of his Institutes to the church, speaking of the necessity of the church's function:

In order that the preaching of the Gospel might flourish, He deposited this treasure in the church. He instituted 'pastors and teachers' [Eph 4:11] through whose lips He might teach His own; he furnished them with authority; finally, He omitted nothing that might make for holy agreement of faith and for right order.¹⁹

He used the title mother to illustrate the importance and place of the church:

For there is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceives us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly, unless she keeps us under her care and guidance until, putting off mortal flesh, we become like the angels [Mt 22:30]. Our weakness does not allow us to be dismissed from her school until we have been pupils all our lives.²⁰

Anabaptism draws heavily on the work and influence of Luther and Zwingli in its contribution to biblical understanding of the church and its ministry. As hinted above, within the larger number known as Anabaptists was a smaller group whose root of faith was the Scripture, constituting them as the true Anabaptists. This included men like Conrad Grebel (1495-1526), Michael Sattler (1490-1527), Balthasar Hubmaier (1480-1528), and Menno Simons (1496-1561). Though influenced by the theology of the magisterial reformers, these men went further in their efforts to re-institute a primitive, biblical church and ministry. In describing the nature of their ecclesiology, Bender remarks, "The Anabaptist idea of the church is derivative, based on the deeper idea of

¹⁹ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 166.

²⁰ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 167.

discipleship, which of course also implies an active covenanting 1191 into a brotherhood, without which discipleship could not be realized.”²¹

The above discussion reveals that the Reformation era refocused the church on a biblical structure for the ministry. The Magisterial Reformers made significant progress in their reformation of the church. Among the Radical Reformers are those who carried through this commitment in seeking to re-institute a consistent biblical ministry.²²

The Modern Period 1649—Present

The modern era has many examples of those who have sought a biblical church ministry. Some of them have drawn on the heritage of progress toward a biblical ministry by the Magisterial Reformers. The survey of this chapter can cite only a few outstanding examples of biblical ministry.

One such pastor was Richard Baxter (1615—1691), the early Puritan divine. He is best known for the book, *The Reformed Pastor*, which he wrote in 1656 during a nineteen-year pastorate in Kidderminster, England. The book concentrates on Acts 20:28 in developing his philosophy of ministry. He deals with the pastor's labors, confessions, motives, constraints, and dedication. The work is profoundly deep and intensely spiritual as it flows from the heart of a humble pastor to other pastors:

I do now, in the behalf of Christ, and for the sake of his Church and the immortal souls of men, beseech all the faithful ministers of Christ; that they will presently

²¹ Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 168.

²² Stitzinger, “Pastoral Ministry in History”, 171.

and effectually fall upon this work. ... This duty hath its risen either from us, but from the Lord, and for my part... tread me in the dirt.²³

The larger Puritan movement advanced the church through its clear focus on the Word of God. Though never becoming a distinct and unified denomination, the Puritans nevertheless exerted considerable influence on many others. Anglicanism labeled most English Puritans nonconformists, yet the British Puritans were unable to establish their own churches, as American Puritans were able to. Even in America, though, they identified with various denominations rather than forming their own church. Leland Ryken concludes:

There was, to be sure, a theoretical Puritan consensus on most issues involving worship and the theory of what a church is. Puritanism also bequeathed at least one permanent legacy, the phenomenon of a "gathered church" separate from the state and with an accompanying proliferation of independent churches.²⁴

After the Puritan era, Charles Bridges (1794—1869), a pastor in England for fifty-two years, wrote his respected *The Christian Ministry*. He combined a deep and accurate knowledge of Scripture with great spirituality and humility to produce a classic work worthy of careful reading. In a word, he feels that the "sum of our whole labor in this kind is to honor God, and to save men."²⁵

Charles Spurgeon (1834—1892), primarily known for his preaching rather than his daily functions in the pastorate, taught his students the principles of preaching; nevertheless, he viewed the ministry as centered around serving the spiritual needs of his

²³ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 172.

²⁴ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 172.

²⁵ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 175.

people. He wrote, "Ministers are for churches, and not churches for ministers."

Significantly, the controversies surrounding Spurgeon's ministry have everything to do with the application of his theology to pastoral duties, such as to Nineteenth-century pastors, including G. Campbell Morgan (1863-1945) and missionary Roland Allen (1868-1947), provided other important examples of faithful ministry. The long teaching ministry of Benjamin B. Warfield (1851—1921) at Princeton Theological Seminary (1887—1921) was a great positive influence in promoting biblical ministry.²⁶

Since the twentieth century began, theological liberalism has found its way into every major denomination and replaced the passion for biblical ministry in many instances with an agenda of the social gospel. The rise of New Evangelicalism in 1958, with its intentional accommodation of error, along with its subsequent tributaries into pragmatic ministry, was another step away from biblical ministry. Much true biblical ministry in recent years occurs in smaller denominations or churches, which have continued the Free Church tradition. The nature of such ministry is obscure and often difficult to identify because of a lack of adequate documentation.²⁷

This is but a brief history of biblical pastoral ministry. Such accounts are often based on those ministries whose record remains for future generations to examine. There are many faithful ministers who have also sought a biblical ministry and whose accomplishments only heaven has recorded. The future examination of each man's ministry (1 Cor. 3:13-15) and the recounting of faithful ministry for God's glory will be a

²⁶ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 176.

²⁷ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 177.

time of great rejoicing in heaven. Today's pastors can find great encouragement and receive great challenges by examining the lives and convictions of faithful ministers of the past. May this generation and future generations of Christ's servants commit themselves to the purest form of primitive, biblical ministry so that when history records their efforts, they may say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith"(2 Tm 4:7, emphasis added).²⁸

One of the challenges of the church today is to develop new operational paradigms that will address pastoral leadership health and sustainability, while also allowing the church to be more responsive and engaging in the contemporary culture. While the church is a spiritual organism, there is still great benefit in utilizing communal and corporate resourcing models consistent with modern economic principles and opportunities. In this age of post-modernity, the problems of evolving human history and destiny are compounded for the church with the issues of how to be the church in this age of rapid change. To use Carl George's terminology, the meta-church is the church in transition, that is changing and turning, with a new paradigm emerging and is becoming something new.²⁹ The church cannot stay the same, even if the expressed desire seems to be to continue doing the same things the same way. In this document some of the issues facing the church for this current age will be set in the historical context of how the church has responded in the past with the potential impact of such insight in my current ministry context.

²⁸ Stitzinger, "Pastoral Ministry in History", 180.

²⁹ Carl F. George, *The Coming Church Revolution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell Publishing, 1994), 27.

Of the many side effects of post-modernity, the tendency for people to lean towards individualism and away from authentic community may be viewed as a slap in the very face of God's love plan through the right and restored relationship which is manifested in Jesus Christ. Human autonomy can be, and usually is very damaging to the Christian enterprise. Contemporary society's inheritance of the Enlightenment period has shown itself in great proportions as it draws nearer to the third millennium. Progress manifested in modern technology and computers, isolationist tendencies, economic disparity, and community fracturing may be the children of rationalism and give way to a viewpoint of reason as their god with little regard for the existence of God. It is amazing that the Enlightenment perspective has affected all that has happened in ecclesiastical thought and practice in Protestantism since the eighteenth century. On the other side of the community breakdown of contemporary society, the Enlightenment emphasis on people being related to God directly is also evident. With the rise again of New Age religion and personal spirituality apart from the one true God and community we have reaped some of the same negative effects of this worldview.

Further, how one sees himself or herself in relationship to God has profound impact on how one sees others and treats others. When a ministry thrust is enacted from a position of structural power, the face of it is different than seen from the realization of common ground. The world could be immensely different place if societies would use scientific knowledge, progress mentality, problem-solving capacity, and strength in reasoning as merely the means by which we could come together and dwell together, instead of the end in itself. While the push towards autonomy and individualistic soul-wealth is the

surface symptom of third millennium sin, underneath, and possibly unknown to the majority is the conformation to societal images and idols which essentially destroys personhood. All the while people are merely searching for an identity in something greater than themselves. There is a crisis for many people in the world at both the individual and the community levels. There is a “gap between vision and reality that, in turn, has precipitated a crisis in their worldview and self-understanding.”³⁰ People are literally dying for an answer to the dilemma of anxious personhood. Henri Nouwen expounded on the deep inner threat that all humanity struggles against.³¹ It is the anxious living from day to day in the light of a loving God for whom people are invited to accept.

Because of human attempts to settle for less, to create meaning in life, and the refusal to engage the tension between what life seems to be and what life is to be, people tend to choose bondage to fear and faithlessness. Doubt, uncertainty, anxiety, and endless questions of life, though not too distant from that of all human history, characterizes the contemporary world. In the midst of growing cynicism, fatalism, hedonism, and narcissism, there is the call and cry for an alternative, for which C. Peter Wagner called for the composition of the twenty-first century church to provide an answer. “Aggressively reaching out to the lost and hurting of the community and the world is part of the new apostolic DNA.”³² The Christian church is in a unique position to interpret meaning for people on an unending quest to make sense of it all. The increasing sense of

³⁰ David Bosch, *Believing in the Future* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity International Press, 1995), 3.

³¹ Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus* (New York, New York: Crossroads Publishing, 1996), 10.

³² Peter Wagner, *The New Apostolic Churches* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1998), 24.

unknowing that the world is faced with is the ground upon which the gospel message can be shared. We know as the church what lies ahead because the relationship with God in Christ has revealed the church's reason for being.

So, the community of faith, the church is to be the messenger that carries and bears the burden of hope for the world in Jesus Christ. "The Christian gospel accents decision, commitment, engagement, and action which transform what is in the light of that which is to be."³³ Instead of remaining a barrier, the church is called to be the vessel through which God's voice can be heard without competition. How can God speak through the church to a pre-Christian world in a way that is faithful and operationally effective? There can be at least three transitional approaches to how the church should be in this postmodern world may provide some fruitful life within and without the church. If the church is to address the needs of our contemporary world with the impact and power of the gospel there must be an inward change. The church lacks discipline, in terms of commitment, concentration, continuity, and constancy. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can supply what is needed to be witnesses for Christ. The first locus of God's presence in the new covenant is within his people, sanctifying their present existence and stamping it with his own eternity. In other words, the life that we live in witness to the transforming power of God must originate with our renewed sense of God active within the church.

Transformation might entail paying attention to the various places in the communal Christian journey. First one must observe the mileposts, or how far the people of God

³³ Cornel West, *Prophecy Deliverance* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1982), 17.

have come. Rather than discarding totally the rich history, tradition and foundation one must look at what people can gain from the points along the way that have been life transforming. But with all of the transforming things the church has done over the ages, it still tends to resist change. Barna is correct,

Coping with rapid, fundamental, continual change is perhaps more difficult for the Church than for almost any other group. When changes occur that affect a for-profit business, those in charge must determine how those changes impact its bottom line, its core operating values, its existing relationships, and its production procedures and capacity. When Christ's representatives address changes in their environment, the choices they make and the manner in which they respond to new opportunities, limitations, and conditions are even more significant. In addition to considering how their decisions will affect the physical and temporal needs of people, the Church must also consider the eternal spiritual consequences. Thus, one of the keys to serving Christ effectively is modeling for the world how to appropriately anticipate and respond to change in our culture.³⁴

The community must also heed the checkpoints or evaluate where it happens to be or are not in terms of what God is doing. Often this is totally against what the world may be doing, yet we capitulate. A revisiting of historical highlights might reveal that Protestant Christianity has identified with the status quo. Martin Luther condemned the Peasant's Revolt because it was a movement against the state as servant of God. Calvinism and Methodism found an easy affinity with slavery and capitalism in early America. James Cone calls this an "ethic of the status quo."³⁵

The history of the church in America has represented Protestant intercourse with the status quo, from which the child of slavery and oppression was born. Gunnar Myrdal wrote that, "The dilemma in America derived from a conflict between the high-sounding

³⁴ George Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Word Publishing, 1998), 43.

³⁵ James Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Publishing, 1975), 199.

Christian concepts embodied in the American creed as compared to the way Americans really behaved.³⁶ Throughout our American history there has been a tendency toward what McGrath calls a 'dead orthodoxy,'³⁷ a mere promulgation of what one believes, rather than a dynamic faith in action. It is the task of the church to follow Christ and the way of the cross in relationship, witness, and practice. If scripture is the ultimate authority by the witness of the Holy Spirit; if there is in fact a priesthood of all believers; if Jesus Christ is Lord of all life and creation who died and was raised that all might be saved; then the road has been paved. Cone noted,

The opening has been made and the church must follow. To follow means that the church is more than a talking or a resolution-passing community. Its talk is backed up with relevant involvement in the world as a witness, through action, that what it says is in fact true.³⁸

Inner-transformation may also include a look at the overall process of moving towards spiritual revolution. Beckham, summarizing Francis Schaeffer, outlined the formula for spiritual revolution. "Reformation of Doctrine + Revival of God's Spirit + Remnant of God's Committed + Restoration of New Testament Design = Spiritual Revolution."³⁹ What one believes must be tested and retested by the fire of relevance and practical application, and not merely by what and how he or she has always believed.

³⁶ Gunnar Myrdal, *The American Dilemma* (New York, NY: Harper Publishing, 1944), 79.

³⁷ Alister McGrath, *Christian Theology* (Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell, 1994), 68.

³⁸ James Cone, *Black Theology and Black Power* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Publishing, 1969), 68.

³⁹ William A. Beckham, *The Second Reformation* (Houston, TX: Touch Publications, 1997), 232.

This must be added to a washing in the freedom of God's presence. God must not be confined to the proverbial box and the Spirit's hold on us must not be taken as bondage to one's own self-imposed limitations. There must also be a gathering and unifying of the faithful remnant who may be in tune to the voice and God and who may be convicted out of complacency. Finally, there must be a contemporary application of timeless New Testament foundations. Inner transformation as spiritual revolution can happen.

Another essential element for inner-church transformation is what Kraft perceives as the "Curiosity of what God will do next."⁴⁰ The church ought to live in the world of not only wonderment of God's imminent activity, but the sheer great expectation of eternal glory displayed for the purpose of transformed lives. God is able to do great things with us, through us, for us and because of us. We have settled for low living and standards of mediocrity where God is concerned.

The irritation and resentment which get so many people up in arms, which confuse them and prompt them to protest and demonstrate – or, in defiance, to do nothing or to flee to a drugged oblivion – these are unmistakable signs of a deeply rooted dissatisfaction with the world where we are forced to live out our lives... Some have given up this effort and have come to the conclusion that the only chance left for a man to find peace and calm is to retreat from this chaotic world. They turn in disgust from society with its institutions and plans. Whatever one does, whether he becomes a hippie, a yippie, a revolutionary or a meek dreamer, whether one calls for the changing of structures or lets it all float by with a melancholy grin, the resentment remains, fierce and discernible or deeply suppressed beneath an attitude of passive indifference. It is not hard to distinguish in all these phenomena a deep longing for another world. The society as it is now must change, its false structures must disappear, and something entirely new must take their place.⁴¹

⁴⁰ Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity With Power* (Ann Arbor, MI: Vine Books, 1989), 147.

⁴¹ Nouwen, *With Open Hands*, 122, 123.

McGrath writes about the theology of the barricade where the Christian church resists rather than affirming the world in which we live. Faith and the world are opposing forces, to be kept apart at all costs. Theological purity is maintained at the price of near-total inability to address the world outside its self-appointed—heavily barricaded—enclosure. It is a defensive form of spirituality, maintained by a siege mentality. Its authenticity is judged by the extent to which secular ideas and values are excluded from every area of faith. On the other end is the theology of posture where what we are and how we function as the church is predicated upon a diluted standard. “This can take the form of erecting an entire theological foundation on a contemporary cultural idea or value, without any reference to the historic resources of the Christian tradition... (it) is little more than a transient agglomerate of attitudes and ideas, deriving directly from its secular environment.”⁴²

Similarly, Tillich wrote,

A church in which this divine protest does not find a human voice through which it can speak has become conformed to this eon. Here we see what non-conformity ultimately is—the resistance to idolatry, to making ultimates of ourselves and our world, our civilization and our church... Therefore, dare to be not conformed to this eon, but transform it courageously first in yourselves, then in your world—in the spirit and the power of love.⁴³

The church wages war against itself with over-emotionalism, over-rationalism, and independent choices, to which only a God-originated, Christ-centered, Holy Spirit-guided, person-sensitive community can respond in love. The church has the answer.

⁴² McGrath, *Spirituality in An Age of Change*, 138.

⁴³ Paul Tillich, *The Eternal Now* (New York, NY: Paul Scribner and Sons Publishing, 1963), 144.

The great rule of leadership is true; Form must always follow function. So what kind of vehicle can carry the renewed sense of Spirit and the imaginations of Godly people not shackled in conformity? “Many start the life of faith with great enthusiasm only to discover themselves in difficulty shortly afterward. Their high hopes and good intentions seem to fade way. The spirit may be willing, but the flesh proves weak. Fallen human nature all too often proves incapable of sustaining the high levels of enthusiasm and commitment that characterize the early days of faith. People need support to keep them going when enthusiasm fades.”⁴⁴ People need people.

One thing Barna notes as important and necessary transitions that the church must make is to become a birthing center for new churches. Dialogical forums and compassion clusters are two forms that our contemporary churches may utilize to remain relevant, impacting and appealing.⁴⁵ Opportunities for small groups of people to exchange and interchange will need to be a practice for the decentralized (scattered) church. It is in these smaller settings that needs could be met, questions can be answered, meaning can be grounded, and anxieties can be addressed personally. An historical overview describes that as the church attends to its nature and calling it can through a transformative process effectively address the needs of people.

This brief review of the biblical concepts of pastor/pastoral, minister/ministry is far from complete. A fuller examination of the texts, their interpretation, and their influence on ecclesial orders in the course of history lies beyond the limits of this

⁴⁴ McGrath, *Spirituality in An Age of Change*, 12.

⁴⁵ Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church*, 181.

discussion. However, even this hasty overview points to the fact that it was in terms of ecclesial orders, liturgical worship and sacramental life that an understanding of the role of the pastor and the minister has prevailed in Christian tradition. Ecclesiastical language has specified the understanding in terms of the clergy and the hierarchy. Ecclesiastical practice has, until recently, determined the scope and the nature ministry exercised by the pastors of the Church.

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Pastoral theology, in a general sense, is the study of how and why Christians care. We love because God first loved us. How love is shared depends largely on how pastoral ministry is practiced in everyday life. Caring need not be complicated, however, it can take a lifetime of investigation and exploration through prayer to uncover the deeper meanings of love and the way God requires humanity to love Him and one another. In order for pastoral theology to emerge into loving ways of care, it must be drenched in humility, both intellectually and spiritually. Under close examination, many well-known pastors and theologians do not practice such love and care; making them seem surprisingly untaught lacking in mentorship.

With this in mind, questions should be raised to the nature and purpose of pastoral theology. Is pastoral theology at its best a specialized discipline of highly trained academics and professionals? Can we increase the level of critical expertise making it stand head and shoulders above ordinary Christians? Or is there something special about providing care for the unskilled Christian whose unassuming compassion reflects the humble generosity of God. Regardless of the answers to these questions, the pastor will always be a non-expert who should respond to learning humbly, never forgetting the profound mysteries that will always lie beyond one's grasp. Also, even as experienced as we may be as pastors and appreciated by our peers and congregations with quality care,

we must recognize that the more proficient we become as ministers, the more essential it will be for us to develop our understanding and to deepen our pastoral integrity.¹

A Commitment to Love and Care

Deeply imbedded in the life of the Christian church is the notion that God is a God of steadfast love. Throughout the Bible are countless stories of men and women who have encountered the love of God leading to a transformed life. This type of love according to the Hebrew text is called *hesed*, or covenant love. This love can be characterized as the kind of love that springs forth from the heart of God as an outpouring on God's people who out of a response to God's love share this love with one another.

This love takes concrete form in the narrative account of the call of Abraham and his decedents. As God molds a people to be his very own, they experienced mishaps, disobedience, disappointments, oppression, liberation, exile, restoration, and renewal. In all that transpired, God's love and compassion for them held firm. As a mother tenderly embraces her children, God protects and gathers his people to his heart of love. In return for receiving God's love, the people are required to live as a covenant community and care faithfully for each other. In spite of their inability to keep covenant with God, the covenant that God established with them would remain in effect.²

The *hesed* love of God is exemplified in the life of pastoral theology today in three very distinct ways. First through a radical theological agenda; here the limitless

¹ Margaret Whipp, *SCM Study Guide: Pastoral Theology* (London, UK: SCM Publishing House, 2013), 93, Kindle.

² Whipp, *SCM Study Guide*, 109, Kindle.

possibilities to show the love of God towards others made possible. This is when the pastor touches and transforms life at seemingly kairos moments with moments of gracious opportunity for new freedom and forgiveness, healing and hope. Second is the corporate outlook. This is when the pastor has the opportunity to turn outward to a world that is hurting for all manner of social ills and provide a soothing balm of care. The visible presence of God through the pastor as a caring individual allows the love of God to flow outward to places that are dark and foreboding, yet able to receive healing, reconciliation, and forgiveness. Thirdly is person investment. Here, pastors demonstrate the costly sacrifice of Christian care. Using the model of Jesus and His self-sacrificing love and care for others, his disciples were able to extend Jesus' love to far-reaching places while sharing His humble compassion and suffering service.³

The Mind of the Pastor

The mind of the pastor has a lot to do with how s/he perceives their calling and their work in ministry. While it is common for people to project their ideas and expectations onto caring figures, especially those who are in the public role of clergy, what is intriguing is what the public sees in themselves. With this in mind, some of our most treasured images of ministry might be dangerously misleading: sentimental idols of the mind, which obstruct the authentic purpose of fully Christian care. One of the important tasks of pastoral theology, therefore, is to deconstruct some of these internal

³ Whipp, *SCM Study Guide*, 139, Kindle.

working models and subject them to careful critique. For instance, the image of the pastor as shepherd has come into sharp criticism in recent years. Image of the shepherd as pastor has been identified with a nostalgic agrarian era and has nothing to do with today's urbanized understanding of what a pastor does. In addition, the image of pastor as shepherd perpetuates a strong male patriarchal model that is insensitive to the growing number of women in the clergy ranks today. This in many ways sets up clergy expectations of all-competent ministers who expect to be in charge of their lay, dependent and unintelligent sheep. By redressing the notion of pastor as shepherd will avoid unnecessary ego-inflated idols, which are demeaning to those for whom we are called to care.⁴ On the other hand, we should be careful not to take the criticism of pastor as shepherd too far. There are too many scriptures that present the pastor as shepherd in a very positive light, such as Jesus being a too good shepherd (Jn 10:1-16). Pastoral theology at its constructive best will enrich and inspire through a whole fund of images, which both critique and expand a vividly Christian imagination of the possibilities of care. Robert Dykstra, for example sets alongside the ideal of the solicitous or courageous shepherd the more paradoxical mages of the circus clown, the wounded healer, the wise fool or the patient midwife.⁵

Reconstructing and refreshing the pastor in the mind, in a world of confusing and often conflicting expectations of Christian ministry, becomes an essential discipline for the nurturing and deep-rooted integrity and pastoral wisdom. If we can dare to be honest

⁴ Whipp, *SCM Study Guide*, 200, Kindle.

⁵ Whipp, *SCM Study Guide*, 200, Kindle.

about the pious pretenses that sometimes possess the imagination, then we might begin to develop not only a proper humility about our calling, but also a good-humored sense of godly perspectives.

For decades, pastoral theology has been regaining its theological roots at the level of deep foundational assumptions and practice. Recently, pastoral theology has recognized the importance of reflecting on the church as she is built up daily by the power of the Holy Spirit in history as a living sign and instrument of salvation through Jesus Christ. Yet, pastoral theology is that branch of theology that cannot be neglected because of its fundamental importance and relevance to both the Church and society. It bridges the relationship between the Church and society. It does this by providing care for the individual through personal experiences and makes meaningful contributions to the development of human beings, not neglecting their salvation and temporal good. It begins with situations of human beings particularly that of suffering and tries to bring together cognate and theological resources to deepen the understanding and shape mission of the Church in order to respond and attend to the healing and care of the suffering.⁶

Of all the activities that comprise the work of pastoral ministry, life in Christ becomes the ground or center what this work entails. Proponents of pastoral theology seek to point to that center and reconcile every activity of a pastor back to that center.

⁶Chiemeka Maria Utazi, "The Nature and Subject Matter of Pastoral Theology," accessed March 5, 2017, https://archive.org/stream/THENATUREANDSUBJECTMATTERFPASTORALTHEOLOGY/THE%20NATURE%20AND%20SUBJECT%20MATTER%20OF%20PASTORAL%20THEOLOGY_djvu.txt.

That center is Christ's work in us and through us as we strive to embody all that Christ is as we speak words from the biblical text, work in ministries of service and mission and show up for people in critical times in their lives as the ministry of presence.⁷

A major part of the theological task of defining a theology of pastoral ministry is to hold in tension the work of clergy over and against the work of laity. This task is not to minimize the work of the laity, nor is it to displace the work of clergy. The goal is to find an appropriate center such that laity who is called to serve as ministers of the gospel is able to do their work without blurring the lines of the work of the ordained. This task is further complicated as the work of pastoral ministry has taken on specialization causing the work of pastoral ministry to lose its identity. Because of specialization, pastors have been placed in categories of preaching sermons, counseling, blessing functions and events, funerals, baptism, marriages etc. As a result, much of the work of ministry that remains has become relegated to laity who assumes these roles with authority and dedication.⁸

No doubt, a major cause of clergy burnout is due to a lack of clergy identity and what constitutes ministry. A significant remedy for clergy burnout is the re-rooting of pastoral wisdom carefully held together by Christ and our ministry, God's gifts and the church's tasks, grace and responsiveness. Many instances of burnout could have been avoided by better biblical foundation, one that rings with the twenty-century of wisdom

⁷ Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry* (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishing, 1983), 3.

⁸ Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*, 5.

and experience of doing ministry.⁹ Pastoral theology is the branch of Christian theology that deals with the office, gifts, and functions of the pastor. As theology, pastoral theology seeks to reflect on the self-disclosure of God witnessed to by scripture, mediated through tradition, reflected upon by critical reason and embodied through personal and social experience. The call to ministry requires and inward conviction that one is called by God to ministry and the outward call of the believing community that has assessed one's potential to serve the body of Christ.¹⁰

The concept of pastor based on the shepherding analogy is the unifying principle of ministry. The pastor is a member of the body of Christ who is called by God and the church and set apart by ordination representatively to proclaim the word, administer the sacraments, and guide and direct the Christian community toward full response to God's self-disclosure. Other important images of ministry such as teacher, overseer, liturgist, elder or priest are infused with special significance by analogy to good shepherding. By both teaching and example, Jesus left a highly suggestive, if not explicitly developed, conception of pastoral ministry. It is the bold intention of Christ's ministry to combine the prophetic and priestly ministry into a single, unified ministry of word and sacrament which one person serves the priestly function of conducting public worship and the prophetic office of providing religious instruction, exegesis and proclamation of the Word. One of the most cohesive forces in pastoral identity is in the public role of leader

⁹ Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*, 5.

¹⁰ Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*, 6.

of the worshiping community.¹¹ Gregory of Nazianzus, known as Gregory the Great by the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus and also known as the *Theologian* has much to offer to pastoral theology. Gregory says, “Not to everyone, my friends, does it belong to philosophize about God.” Gregory was aware that the theologian had to embody a quality of life and faith that was appropriate to the nature of God. For Gregory, the theologian must be polished and able to handle the divine mysteries of God under their own breath and holy things in a holy manner.¹² He further asserts, the goal of the Christian life for pastors must have in view the purpose for which people were created, from which they had fallen away, and for which is the direction of being in relationship with God in the life to come. Gregory believed that pastors are healers, even more so than physicians; he sees pastors as those who treat a sickness that is a deeply subtle foe of healing, a sickness of the soul.

Finally, he maintains that the goal of pastoral work is the salvation and sanctification of a person to provide the soul with wings, to rescue it from the world and give it to God; in short, to defy, and bestow heavenly bliss upon one who belongs to the heavenly host. The pastor, he says is guided by Christ, “a Shepherd to the shepherds and a Guide to guides,” is to guide the flock that Christ himself presents the flock, spotless and worthy of heaven. Such a goal alone is deserving of a pastoral care that is worthy of the true Shepherd.¹³

¹¹ Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*, 6.

¹² Andrew Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classic Tradition* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001), 13.

¹³ Purves, *Pastoral Theology in the Classic Tradition*, 18.

Gregory believes that pastor theology seeks to build on the classical tradition and written in such a way that espoused the work of God in Jesus Christ for salvation for all who trust and believe in Him.

Pastoral theology is not a study in systematic theology or the exegesis of the scripture or ecclesiastical history, or the sacraments, or homiletics, or even the theory of the pastoral office as an institution of divine appointment. Pastoral theology takes for granted that these disciplines are already developed; its purpose is to seek ways of gathering people into the fold of Christ and nurturing them on the word of God. Its aim is not to make ministers through scholars, but to bring souls to Christ and prepare them for the glory of God.

Pastoral theology is based on:

- Manifestly, the word of God must be the chief and authoritative teacher
- The general nature of the scriptures and their great doctrines
- The character of that human nature with which the pastor has to do
- The accumulated experience of other workers in the same general field
- The law and customs of the denomination which they are connected
- The circumstances of the times

While there are other principles of pastoral theology, these are the critical ones that must be studied for the guidance of the minister's life work. An intelligent view of what that work is, and of the principles upon which it rests; will contribute greatly to success in the discharge of its duties.¹⁴

¹⁴ Thomas Murphy, *Pastoral Theology* (Dallas, TX: PRIMEDIA eLaunch, 2013), 3-6.

Therefore, to care for others is not the chief pastoral goal. To care in the manner of Christ is pastoral care's greatest challenge. In a survey of the history of pastoral care, according to Charles Jaekle and William Clebsch, healing, sustaining, guiding and reconciling are the primary functions of the pastor. These are forms of care present in the church throughout all the ages, during changing circumstance the church tended to emphasize some forms more than others. During the first two centuries of the church, sustaining souls was urged during times of world hostility. For the next 100 years, during the time of persecution, reconciliation of the soul into the life of the church through acts of penance and contrition became the central focus. During the times of Constantine and the assimilation of various groups into the ethos of the church, guidance was the central focus.¹⁵ In current times, Willimon believes that too many pastors in mainline Protestant congregations forsook the historic role of pastor in favor of allegedly nonjudgmental, empathetic listening that failed to honor the formative, pedagogical, guiding functions of specifically pastoral care and the moral context of our care. He agrees with Seward.

Hiltner feared moralism as the greatest danger in pastoral care. Others have urged pastors to offer pastoral care unconditioned by judgment. However, theologically pastors cannot forsake the role of bearer of the witness and tradition of the church.¹⁶

¹⁵ William H. Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice of Ordained Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2002), 171-172.

¹⁶ Willimon, *Pastor: The Theology and Practice*, 174.

Pastor as Theologian

According to Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Owen Strachan in their work, *The Pastor as Public Theologian: Reclaiming a Lost Vision* believe that societies become secular when they are no longer agitated by the church and religion. In many ways, the church of Jesus Christ is in a similar position because of the diminishing role of the clergy in the eyes of the congregation.¹⁷ Today, the church no longer sees the role of pastor as a sacred leader; in fact, Vanhoozer and Strachan see this role more secular than ever before. They believe that the church no longer finds the role of pastor theologically exciting or intelligible. Most congregations' idea of pastor as theologian—the one who opens up the scripture to help people understand God, the world, and themselves—no longer causes the hearts of the members to burn within them.¹⁸

Today's pastors seemed to have given up on their vocational birthright for a bowl of lentil stew (Gn 25:29) management skills, strategic plans, leadership courses, therapeutic techniques, and so forth. In fact, these are the skills that most congregations expect their pastors to enter ministry possessing, however; on the other hand, the pastors complain that their seminary education has done little if anything to prepare them for these daunting tasks. Theology, according to the writers have been banished from Jerusalem theology is in exile and, as a result, the knowledge of God is in ecclesial eclipse. The Promised Land, the gathered people of God, has consequently come to

¹⁷ Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Owen Strachan, *The Pastor as Public Theologian: Reclaiming a Lost Vision* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 2015), 3, Kindle.

¹⁸ Vanhoozer and Strachan, *The Pastor as Public Theologian*, 3, Kindle.

resemble a parched land: a land of wasted opportunities that no longer cultivate disciples as it did in the past.

The Lost Vision

Moving past the reality of the role of pastor being diminished in the eyes of congregations throughout the country, we will now look at the overarching problem that plagues pastoral ministry and its ability to theologize in a way that is consistent with the scholars of old. First and foremost, the pastor must have a vision of what the call of God looks like in his heart. Typically, whether they admit it or not, storms or raging seas are the least of pastors' problems. What I believe is most challenging for pastors are the waves of public sentiment and winds of public opinion that act as obstacles and temptations, hindering progress toward their vocation of bringing others to maturity in Christ.¹⁹

Gerald Hiestand and Todd A. Wilson look at pastors as theologians from a very different lens. They believe that pastors do not know who they are or what they are supposed to be. They go on to say that never in modern history has the profession of professional ministry been so vague, lacked specificity, and clarity at the pastoral level. This they posit is why there is a lack of pastoral clarity in ministry today, which contributes to high levels of clergy burnout and the insane attempts at trying to conceal their burnout by self-medicating.

¹⁹ Vanhoozer and Strachan, *The Pastor as Public Theologian*, 5, Kindle.

According to the president of Princeton Seminary, Craig Barnes, “the hardest thing about being a pastor today is confusion about what it means to be the pastor.”²⁰

Hiestand and Wilson believe that pastors have somehow lost the script that tells them who they are, what part they play, what they wear, when to come on stage, what to say, and who to interact with. This departure of authentic pastoral ministry stems from pastors’ inability to keep in touch with the ancient traditions of the church. What was once readily available to pastors is now buried under six-feet of dirt.²¹

Pastor theologians are not extinct but are consistently becoming a rare breed. This is partly because pastors no longer traffic in ideas. They cast vision, manage programs, offer counsel, and give messages. Hiestand and Wilson agree with Vanhoozer and Strachan on this point: pastors are expected to be able to preach, lead, and solve problems. However, the larger church community no longer views pastors as persons who possess intellectual ability. Said differently, pastors are no longer expected to be bona fide contributing members of the theological community, certainly not scholars. Pastors of today are expected to be middle managers that quote a theologian here and a theologian there for good measure; that is all.²²

The division of labor between intellectuals and theologians, on the one hand and pastors and practitioners on the other is a departure from historical precedent. In post-Civil War America, the pastorate was a go-to calling for intellectuals. If a man was

²⁰ Gerald Hiestand and Todd A. Wilson, *The Pastor Theologian: Resurrecting an Ancient Vision* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing, 2015), 9.

²¹ Hiestand and Wilson, *The Pastor Theologian*, 9.

²² Hiestand and Wilson, *The Pastor Theologian*, 11.

unusually gifted and sought a career in which he could make full use of his intellectual mental powers, pastoral ministry was the best vocation available. These pastors were like Reformation-era predecessors—trained theologians who combined spiritual urgency with profound learning. They were able to provide first-rate intellectual discourse on a variety of subject ranging from sacramentology to soteriology, from moral reform to human rights, form theories of the atonement to the nature of the will. Even more, they were catalyst for revivals and yet critique revivals.²³ What is interesting about this group of pastors is that during that day, the word theologian and pastor were synonymous. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the terms overlapped and did not warrant much debate. Also, during this period in church history, people usually looked to pastors for theological leadership. As time progressed and theologians moved from the pulpit to the academy, many of the sanctuaries in American began to feel naked. No longer does the pastoral community have the ability to provide serious intellectual leadership for the crucial issues that confront the church. This situation has been further exacerbated by the onset of the post-Christian cultural movement.²⁴

In the twenty-first century, the church is now confronted with unique challenges, especially since the old social order, which had stability is now collapsing. Today the church faces moral and ethical choices that did not plague the generations of old. Stem cell research, human cloning, state sanctioned same-sex marriages, technology, global

²³ Hiestand and Wilson, *The Pastor Theologian*, 12.

²⁴ Hiestand and Wilson, *The Pastor Theologian*, 13.

free markets, radicalized religion extremism, and terrorism have changed the landscape of ministry as we once knew it. The church now finds itself suffering from theological anemia not represented in its past. The absent of the pastor as theologian has resulted in a deep and chronic theological deficit that may be around for a very long time.²⁵ Not only theological anemia, the church is also suffering from ecclesial anemia as well. From the twentieth century and the time of the Enlightenment period, the academic community no longer sees the church as the most effective medium for intellectual engagement. The results of ecclesial anemia are a lot of theological heavy lifting that fails to generate much in the way of doxology or spiritual formation.

To say it in more succinct terms, it is not hard to spot the difference between the pastorally engaged and theologically earnest tone of theological scholars like Luther, Wesley and Calvin in the life of the local church.²⁶

It is difficult to pinpoint the precise moment when pastors lost interest in theology, though clearly its migration to the academy was an important factor.

It was during the Medieval period when theology first moved into the classroom. Unlike the separation of church and state where the church was empowered to exercise its faith in the highest possible means, the separation between church and academy has left a debilitating effect on the church specifically and the community generally. When viewed based on Matthew 6:24, which says, “No one can serve two masters,” the questions for

²⁵ Hiestand and Wilson, *The Pastor Theologian*, 13.

²⁶ Hiestand and Wilson, *The Pastor Theologian*, 17.

theologians is can the pastor be faithful to the needs of the ever-changing community and the academy at the same time is a sobering one. For centuries after, theology continued to thrive in the church in large part because most theologians were also churchmen. The most decisive break came in the nineteenth century when Friedrich Schleiermacher, a pastor appointed professor at the University of Berlin restructured its curriculum into the fourfold division of biblical studies, church history, systematic theology and practical theology. This restructuring of the curriculum proved very beneficial to the church in North America and led to the division between the classical or academic disciplines and the practical disciplines.²⁷

From this vantage point, the pastor-theologian wrestled not with flesh and blood, but with institutional powers and academic principalities. First, they had to fight against theology being written for academic purposes. Also, theologically, pastors did not have the tools to perform meaningful hermeneutics to relate the biblical text to the problems and issues stemming from the pews.

Secondly, they had to contend with the division between biblical studies and theology. In this wise, commentary material was so dense that pastors found it almost impossible to find information to use in the preaching moment.²⁸ Using this analogy, it would seem that what God had joined together, institutional powers and academic principalities have put to sunder. While the theological community bears the burden for this separation, pastors cannot afford to wait for the academic and church community to

²⁷ Vanhoozer and Strachan, *The Pastor as Public Theologian*, 6, Kindle.

²⁸ Vanhoozer and Strachan, *The Pastor as Public Theologian*, 7, Kindle.

find common ground. A practical path forward is for pastors and theologians to bear one another's burdens for both the theological and ecclesial anemia in the church.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

New operational paradigms designed to address pastoral leadership health and sustainability must not only remain faithful to the Gospel call, but should necessarily leverage effective ministry systems, sound business practices, and healthy economic principles. Increasing the potential and capacity of churches and leaders to do effective ministry requires a drawing upon resources even beyond the traditional modes of service. The church in mission must have her feet planted firmly within a local context and arms that are able to reach out to the wider community. There must be much open-endedness for what the Spirit of God is able to do in the present while still resting in a firm grounding in the tradition and history of what God has already done. A theoretical approach to Christian ministry must therefore be more than mere rhetoric, even more than the verbal proclamation of Jesus Christ to the world. Ministry must be the living proclamation and witness of the people of God in the world in ways that take their totality of living into account.

The Risen Christ is preparing His people to become at one and the same time a contemplative people thirsting for God; a people of justice living the struggle of men and people exploited; a people of communion where the nonbeliever also finds a creative place.¹

¹ Gerald Anderson and Thomas Stransky, “Letter to the People of God” in *Mission Trends*, vol. 2 (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1975), 278.

Poverty, oppression, and injustice, as the unholy enemies of our gospel ministry, for so many is the visible result of another who has been liberated and chooses bondage to sin. Any sin is an abomination, an outrage, and a dreadful violation against the holiness of God, but much more devastating to the world community is the sin that destroys another human life. Though freed in Christ; that does not, it seems, automatically translate into freedom from the sin of selfishness especially in the Western world. And so, part of the gospel mission and message must be attention to our own spiritual poverty accompanied by honest repentance and willingness to move beyond it. This is especially applicable as it relates to pastoral leadership. Cheap grace, cheap justice and cheap love abound in the name of Christianity.

Cheap justice (grace and love) is manifested in the lives of empowered individuals who verbalize prophetic claims on behalf of the oppressed, but who distance themselves physically, emotionally, and politically from the oppressed group, freely imbibing the elite privileges, status, and material benefits offered by the very same structures and networks they oppose with words.²

But, as true *koinonia* occurs, cancer cannot have its way, for mutual sharing keeps the whole body alive and forms the true structure of mission. When we replace our focus upon our own survival, success, and self-satisfaction, and then willingly sacrifice for our neighbor's sake (Christ's sake), community is restored and the future of the reign of God becomes evident in our present.

² Robert McAfee Brown, *Spirituality and Liberation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster Press, 1988), 8.

The Spirit of the Lord is upon the church today. The practical implications for ministry out of a sense of community wholeness should include the health, education and industrial professionals making a difference in an environment not their own. In its broader sense, ministry could be the agricultural and business experts working together across the country, from the ground up and the top down to change inequitable living conditions. Ministry may also be the poor and dispossessed prophetically calling the world to exemplify their convictions. Ministry may be the struggling invisible majority claiming what belongs to them according to God's economy. But most importantly, ministry is the covenantal living and sacrificial sharing for the kingdom's sake to demonstrate the love and power of God active in the world. The Christian response to the gospel must be evidenced by faithful and sacrificial action. With land, labor, capital and information resources we must work out this anointing in the name of love.

Isaiah 61, restated by Jesus in Luke 4, lends itself to the Spirit of the Lord being upon us to allow God's will to be earthly manifested through the Church. The preceding verses of Isaiah 58 ask if true fasting is not to share our food with the hungry and to provide the poor with shelter. Surely the sacrifice begins with the individual where the love of God must become realistically expressed. The faceless and voiceless statistics on poverty need to become transformed into God-created real people and individuals like us, for "community is but an abstraction apart from the collection of selves. Practically applied, a collective action would also include, if only within the auspices of the universal church; The development and shared ownership of property and land which could then be utilized as a means of tangible sustenance production; The manufacture of

various consumer goods which would provide a vehicle into the economic and commercial markets, and subsequently provide the means of future development in all areas. The control and dissemination of information resources through research and education through the dedication of those privileged with the needed abilities; The positive investment and reinvestment of capital resources to provide an economic base that is active and posterity oriented. Imagine one hundred or one thousand who really believed we were anointed individually and corporately to set at liberty those who are bruised.

In making the case for excellence in the church, Ray Anderson calls for emphasis upon the character and purpose that the church must seek in ministry as “ethical integrity, human ecology, personal advocacy, and spiritual parity.”³ Ethical integrity lends itself to the idea that the church involved in ministry is called to love in such a way as to exemplify righteousness and morality in all of its functions, interaction and interrelationships within the world. We have a mandate to engage in faithful witness of honesty, stewardship, and integrity. Human ecology is the call to focus on the quality of life for all persons who come into contact with the church. The church must care and be identified with real people and not consumed with concepts, rules, structures, and bureaucracy instead. Related is the call to personal advocacy. The church, as Jesus did, must be the voice, power, and hand for those with their backs against the wall, for those who are the outcasts and disenfranchised of the world. This call involves a great

³ Ray S. Anderson, *Minding God's Business* (Grand Rapids. MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 109-124.

sensitivity, justice and prophetic challenge to work on behalf of God's people in need. Finally, spiritual parity means inclusiveness and unity in the Spirit of God. The various dimensions of the faith are shared without partiality or inequity within and without the body of Christ.

Bonhoeffer wrote regarding the paradigm for ministry and mission of the church, "The strategies by which we seek to fulfill the will of God in this present time must not depend so much upon methods as upon preparing the way for the kingdom of God."⁴ The church does not save the world, rather, at best, the church can only stand for the kingdom that has come in Christ until Christ returns. It is, however, through the identity and structure of the church that ministry is done.

The identity of the people of God as the church and its practice towards being a faithful witness for the kingdom of God are inextricably related. As the *ecclesia*, or called out ones, the church also has a particular identity that norms and shapes all of its actions and activities. Primarily the church must assume an identity of gospel preaching and proclamation, or *kerygma*.

The message of what God has already done for the world in the Jesus Christ event in history must be shared and communicated. This is the public witness of Christ that seeks to evangelize those without Christ and embrace all persons into the family of God. Secondly, the church can be identified with its holy service of worship and praise, or *leitourgia*. As the body of Christ, the church lives to bring God glory in all its facets, but particularly in the context of weekly worship events. The church must also be a place of

⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (New York, NY: Macmillan Press, 1955), 141.

community solidarity and fellowship, or koinonia. Community is essential to the work and witness of the church. The church is called to be unified, not necessarily uniform, in love and in faith. Right relationships in light of the powerful witness set forth by Jesus the Christ are indispensable for this restoration. The most critical dimension for the church involved in ministry is the idea of faithful and covenantal relationships. The vertical relationship with God in Christ necessitates a healthy horizontal relationship with the people of God and the world. In the paradigm of a healthy family system, we need to engage a relational gospel of love, acceptance, commitment, honesty, and vulnerability.

The family is one of the few images that still has rich potential for communicating meaning to black people ... Family life is universal; it answers to universal human requirements ... The family is not only a social and economic institution – it is also a moral and religious school for children when it functions properly. The Black church, as a social and religious body, has served as a kind of extended family for Blacks.⁵

Probably the cornerstone of the church identity and action is discipleship and Christian formation, or *didache*. In order to mature to Christlikeness, the church must make its priority the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry. Attention must be paid to issues of stewardship in all areas, communion, and devotion to God, and leadership in excellence. This is the facet of ministry that seeks to equip, edify, and empower the saints of God to be all that they can be in world for the sake of them and the world. Finally, the church must focus on ministry, or *diakonia*. Faithful service must be the end result of all activities and actions to meet the needs of God's people and the

⁵ J. Deotis Roberts, *Liberation and Reconciliation: A Black Theology* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1971), 64.

community at large. In all areas the name of Jesus Christ, the good news of the work that God has done in love through Him, and the claim on our lives as a result must be exalted.

The ministry of the church is to “do the work of Christ and be built up in love as the church until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of the Son of God that we will be mature and healthy in Christlikeness” (Eph 4:12b-16). This building up provides the means by which the church is enabled to carry out the work and mission to which she has been called (Mt 28:19-20). Ministry is the dynamic movement of the people of God identified as progressive, responsive, relevant and holistic, purpose-driven around the vision of the leadership and rooted in a firm theological and biblical foundation and directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit. Much like the theology of ministry, the ecclesiology of ministry delineates the areas about which the church must be concerned.

The overarching theme of pastor in the twenty-first century may call for a renewed sense of what it means to equip the saints. Ministerial leadership involves at bottom articulating a vision of what the church is, of its essential being and purpose, and enabling this vision to become a productive ideal that infuses all church activities and all participants.⁶ The pastor’s job is to interpret how God is at work in the lives of the saints, relating the Christian gospel to the human situation, or as Henri Nouwen describes, to articulate inner events. He or she must clarify their theology and nurture their Christian witness, equipping God’s people with spirituality adequate to their discipleship.

⁶ Peter Hodgson, *Revisioning the Church* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1988), 99.

Theology is the art of discerning the nature of God and exploring the implications of that discernment for humankind. Ministry is the art of mediating the passion and will of God among people.⁷

Jesus did this and was engaged in an equipping ministry with the disciples. He loved them (Jn 13:1), He taught them (Mt 5:2), He prayed for them (Lk 22:39-41), and He trained them on the job (Mt 10:5 ff., Luke 10:1 ff.). The pastor, as servant, steward and shepherd, exists as the cohesive element within the church body enabling the church to be the church. The body of Christ is called to be a living, powerful and active witness to the glory of God's kingdom here on earth. As an under shepherd, the pastor is called to spread healing and hope with a divine sensitivity and a responsible theology. The pastor must be the heart of God in pastoral care and counseling, the eyes of God in spiritual guidance and direction, the mouth of God in exhortation and proclamation of the gospel, the hand of God in leadership and motivation, and the mind of God in teaching and preparation. Yet, within all of these heavenly administrations, the pastor is called to divine servanthood as a faithful and loving steward of God's grace and mercy.

In terms of style of leadership, traditionally the Black church has upheld and valued the role of pastor as the spiritual authority and charismatic leader. Adding to this concept of pastoral identity, Anderson and Jones write that charismatic, traditional and rational styles of leadership are needed and essential to the continuing life of the local church.

Associational (traditional) leadership: to provide effective guidance for the gathering church, helping the membership clarify directions and associate together with a free commitment to the mission of the church. Organizational (rational) management: to provide efficient organizational management. The brick-and-mortar, bureaucratic aspects of church life demand careful, efficient

⁷ Kenneth Alan Moe, *The Pastor's Survival Manual* (New York, NY: Alban Institute, 1995), 33.

administration and execution. Spiritual (charismatic) direction: to provide authentic spiritual direction—congruent, authoritative teaching, preaching, counsel, and witness in order to help people know themselves and the world through the eyes of faith.⁸

Much like the symbol of the disciple Peter, the pastor accepts the role of fisherman. He or she gets the ministry going, advances the people of God new and exciting directions, dreams within the reality of God, and dares to launch out into the deep to accomplish God's purposes. Much like the symbol of the apostle Paul, the tent-maker, the pastor is the one who gives structure and form to the ministry, holds it together when it seems to want to go awry, and establishes the rules according to the word of God. Much like the symbol of the disciple John, the net mender, the pastor calls the church back to her original purpose and mission, provides the checks and balances, uphold integrity in life and witness, and is the primary and central problem-solver and trouble-shooter.

Ministry must be grounded in a firm theological and biblical foundation and evidenced by a relevant and practical sociology. It must never become a static organization, but rather a dynamic movement of people in Christ and empowered by the Holy Spirit. More than any other social, or political structure the church stands in a unique position to positively affect the world. Gayraud Wilmore and others elaborate in the context of the Black church.

We reject the notion that the Black church has no power. Each and every week, Black ministers interact with more people than do any other community leaders. Indeed, many Black ministers have limited their roles to visiting the sick, burying the dead, marrying the lovers, and presiding

⁸ James D. Anderson and Ezra Earl Jones, *The Management of Ministry* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1978), 78-79.

over institutional trivia, while leaving responsibility for real social change to politicians and social agencies whom they feel to be more qualified than themselves. But the Black preacher is still the natural leader and the Black church continues to be the richest source of ethically motivated leadership, lay and clergy, in our community... The Black church must re-assert its power to transform our neighborhoods into communities. Our church possesses gospel power which must be translated into community power, for there can be no authentic community in a condition of powerlessness.⁹

Considering the theology of ministry and the ecclesiology of ministry, there remains the practical aspect that allows the church to be truly visible and powerful in the world. There must be real response to issues of life, or orthopraxis that takes into account the contingencies of ministry with imperfect people and an imperfect structure. The gospel, rightly understood, is holistic. It responds to people as whole people; it does not single out just spiritual or just physical needs and speak to those.

Christian community development begins with people transformed by the love of God, who then respond to God's call to share the gospel with others through evangelism, social action, economic development, and justice. God is calling us to impact the world in a way that is local and comprehensive in scope. The church is the only mechanism that can successfully address the problems of urban America and beyond, because we alone possess the resources and divine access to address the moral and spiritual causes that serve as the basis for the existence of the problems. The church is to be the light and the salt amidst the darkness and decay, for it is in this dark climate that the light and countenance of God can be seen more clearly. The bleaker it seems the better the opportunity for the power of God to be perfected. The church is the immune system that

⁹ Gerald Anderson and Thomas Stransky, "Message to the Black Church and Community" in *Mission Trends*, no. 4 (New York, NY: Paulist Press, 1979), 126.

God has commissioned to fulfill Christ's salvation of the world. One major challenge is to be those available vessels to usher in the kingdom of God. What this calls for is the people of God to step forth and to truly be the people of God. It means to embrace the hope of the calling in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit in every person created by God, and the hope of the gospel message that speaks to those who so desperately need restoration and resurrection.

God is calling for the church to work towards a foretaste of the blessed koinonia we will enjoy when the Savior returns through interdependence, mutual empowerment and co-ownership of history—mission-incarnate. We should adopt a realistic and practically expressed sense of what Dr. Cheryl Sanders terms empowerment ethics.

The ethics of empowerment challenges religious leaders to embody creative approaches to personal growth and collective resourcefulness for meeting human need, and to resist the temptation to follow the path of 'cheap justice' that demands repentance and restitution from the oppressing group on behalf of the poor without engaging in a self-critical assessment of the full cost of the equitable sharing of one's own power and resources.¹⁰

The immense task is to engage in meaningful and empowering ministry. Within this working paradigm, Sanders' proposes a well-defined methodological process that draws upon the testimony of those who have gone before us, the protest against inequity, sin and injustice, the uplift of those with their 'backs against the wall,' the cooperation between individuals and groups, the achievement and self-advancement of individuals through education, the re-moralization or transforming of persons, and finally the

¹⁰ Cheryl J. Sanders, *Empowerment Ethics for a Liberated People* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 124.

ministry of empowered saints. The seven processes in this work represent a revitalized and recaptured empowerment ethics paradigm for working towards shalom that Jesus spoke of in the Black community and resultantly in the broader global community. They are intended to “foster an integrated understanding of experience, insight, and struggle, toward the end of prescribing a holistic vision of African American moral progress that is informed by past achievements, responsive to present demands, and accountable to future generations.”¹¹ The church must be Christ-centered and neighbor-oriented, rather than Christian-centered and self-oriented.

Accordingly, there are four target areas that can be identified and lifted for the twenty-first century ministry paradigm in the church and consequently as resources towards the equipping of pastoral leadership. The first is technology equipping. In this continually emerging global community the issue of increasing dependence upon technology resources will call for the church to be attuned to how this will definitely impact people’s lives. As part of ministry the church must be able to communicate in technological terms, use the various mediums of high technology to reach and equip people, and safeguard against the growing disparity as a result of improved technology between the rich and the poor. Especially in the black community this needs to be a particularly intentional area of growth, development and education.

The second area targeted for ministry enhancement is production and manufacturing. One of the areas of deficiency in many communities is the failure to produce goods, rather most in the community have been relegated to being consumers

¹¹ Sanders, *Empowerment Ethics for a Liberated People*, 5.

only. This has a tendency of making allowances for the devaluation of people and their giftedness. Another area that ministry must address in this regard is the potential for material development as a means to offset the prevalent consumerism mentality.

A third target area for ministry is ecumenical and interfaith cooperation. Increasingly the Christian population is becoming a minority. One could take for granted that people knew the Triune God that Christians confess; now an entire generation is growing up and does not fully realize the Christian tradition that was once strong in the black community. As a result, part of the task of ministry will be to encourage ecumenical relationships with non-denominational, mainline, and Pentecostal expressions of Christianity to strengthen the Christian presence in those communities. Practically, there must also be improved dialogue, interaction, and cooperation with the Muslim communities that have taken root in Black neighborhoods, which can result in a positive climate for all concerned.

Finally, the fourth target area for ministry building is intergenerational bridging and formation. Concerted effort must be given to bridge the widening gaps that exist between the generational segments of the church. There has been a decisive and evident break between the generations of the elders and that of the youth of today. In the middle of this chasm is the baby buster group that must play a large role in this bridging. The traditions, stories, values, and experiences of all groups must be celebrated in a unified way to contribute to the increased health and maturity of the body of Christ.

Pastoral Ministry Models

There is a vast amount of resources on effective pastoral ministry; pastoral effectiveness, pastoral gifting, pastoral success, etc. These resources vary in topic and most of them deal with the art of leading congregations and managing people. While none of these resources deal specifically with pastoring without pressure, they lend themselves to modification toward that end. We will now look at some of these models and how these models can be used to develop a contextual model for this project as well as aid in solving the problem that pastors universally have when dealing with the day-to-day life of pastoral ministry.

In *The Effective Pastor: A Practical Guide to the Ministry*, Robert C. Anderson says that there are a number of ways that can make a pastor effective. His book is broken down into four categories and thirty-one chapters. The broad categories of his book are 1) The pastoral role; 2) The pastor's relationships; 3) The pastoral tasks; and 4) The pastor's administrative tasks. From the outside looking in, the role of a pastor according to Anderson is a daunting task, one where even an accomplished pastor can easily get bogged down and feel overwhelmed.¹²

Anderson ends his book with some very solid and sound advice for all pastors, regardless of their stage in ministry. He says, that of all the words in the English language

¹² Robert C. Anderson, *The Effective Pastor: A Practical Guide to the Ministry* (Chicago, IL: The Moody Bible Institute, 1985), iii-iv.

the word pastor is the most ambiguous in regard to interpretation and application. Pastors, according to Anderson are not special people from the perspective of being better or possessing rare gifts and talents like many world-class athletes. In retrospect, pastors are ordinary people who have realized the direct call of God to a unique ministry on behalf of God's church.¹³

Unlike in most professions today where people go into specialized fields and spend their time perfecting that area, pastors are like general practitioners. Pastors are required to meet varied needs of the congregation and become extremely proficient at many things. With this in mind, Anderson brings to conclusion his work with four timeless pillars that make the job of pastoral ministry rewarding and self-fulfilling:

- Continue to Grow – Remember that you are only as effective as the tools and knowledge you have. Skills increase the more you use them and realize you never arrive, your ministry is a journey of becoming.
- Be Modest – Pastors must constantly remind themselves of the need to be modest and not think more highly of themselves than they ought because of their position and title of pastor. God provides each local congregation with all the people and people gifts necessary to be the body of Christ. The person of pastor has not and will never possess all the gifts necessary to be the church.
- Do your Best – Because pastors are not specialist, rather, general practitioners. This means that not all tasks will be performed with the same level of proficiency and skill. The pastor must learn that regardless of the task, they must do their best to the glory of God.
- Love Your People and Preach the Word – Of all the things a pastor should remember, it is to love the people and preach the word. Loving the people is the key to being accepted as the pastor. The pastor must love the people as a parent loves their child. Loving them means during good and trying times. Preaching the word must be done faithfully and not for praise. The pastor

¹³ Anderson, *The Effective Pastor*, 363.

must be faithful in biblical exegesis so that the people will know what God is actually saying.¹⁴

Bob Farr and Kay Kotan in *The Necessary Nine: Things Effective Pastors Do Differently* provide nine points pastors must do differently for the church to build relationships with and reach people beyond ecclesiastical walls. They include:

- Show up and move on
- Listen up and lead with your ears
- Adopt a bias for action
- Get spiritual
- Get grouped and grounded
- Speak the truth with determined patience
- Lead up and manage down
- Preach and worship well
- Have some fun¹⁵

In contrast, *Seven Practices of Effective Ministry* by Andy Stanley and Lane Jones provide a different approach for effective pastoring. Instead of coaching and teaching pastors what to do, they recommend considering seven points as guideposts for building strong congregational relationships. They include:

- Clarify to win – Define what is important at every level of the organization
- Think steps not programs – Before you start anything, make sure it takes you where you need to go

¹⁴ Anderson, *The Effective Pastor*, 365.

¹⁵ Bob Farr, Kay Kotan, *The Necessary Nine: Things Effective Pastors Do Differently* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2016), Kindle.

- Narrow the focus – Do fewer things in order to make a great impact
- Teach for less – Say only what you need to say to the people who need to hear it
- Listen to outsiders – Focus on who you are trying to reach, not who you are trying to keep
- Replace Yourself – Learn to hand off what you do
- Work on it – Take time to evaluate your work—and to celebrate your wins¹⁶

The final model for examination is that of sanctuary. Often, when pastors speak of pastoral effectiveness they neglect to speak in terms of their own needs for spiritual renewal. The error of this thinking, in some instances, is a denial of the toll that pastoring takes on a weekly-bases for pastors whether they are engaged in full-time pastoring or not. Also, it minimizes the needs of pastors when they experience fatigue and exhaustion to have support systems in place without the disgruntle comments from their congregations to relieve them for that period of self- renewal.

Debora Jackson, in *Spiritual Practices for Effective Leadership: 7 Rs of Sanctuary for Pastors* reminds her readers that the intentional practice of spiritual renewal and spiritual formation is essential if pastors seek longevity and joy in their ministry. She goes on to say that through spiritual engagement, an individual can realize a renewed sense of purpose, which provides perspectives about how that purpose fits in the greater context, and potential insight regarding how that purpose might be realized. Pastors

¹⁶ Andy Stanley, Lane Jones, *Seven Practices of Effective Ministry* (New York, NY: Multnomah Books, 2004)

emerge from Jackson's understand of sanctuary with the potential to lead more effectively.¹⁷ The seven 7 Rs of sanctuary according to Jackson are:

- Retreat
- Release
- Review
- Reconnect
- Reflect
- Recalibrate
- Return

Jackson firmly believes that for pastors to face the ever-changing circumstances and situations of pastoral ministry, they must constantly renew their minds. It is from such renewed ways of thinking that we are able to discern God's will and be the leaders God would have us be.¹⁸

Overall, as stated earlier, there are a number of methods that assist pastors in becoming effective in pastoral ministry. Not all methods are the same nor do they espouse the same range of discipline. However, each method presented leaves room for interpretation and contextualization so that pastors from all walks of like are able to assess for themselves where they are in ministry and make the necessary adjustments to chart new paths and advance their desires to become the best pastors God has called them

¹⁷ Debora Jackson, *Spiritual Practices for Effective Leadership: 7 Rs of Sanctuary for Pastors* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2015), 4.

¹⁸ Jackson, *Spiritual Practice for Effective Leadership*, 6.

to be. Although many pastors continue to maintain the old guard of keeping significant portions of their ministry private, covenant groups, interfaith pastoral gatherings, non-competing alliances, and other outlets are now available to pastors. Tapping into and using such resources will help to avoid the unnecessary tendency for pastors to suffer in silence and become depressed under the weight of being faithful to the ministry that God has assigned.

In seeking to find the ideal model of a program similar to the Pastoring Without Pressures concept of my project, that one does not exist one-size fits all model does not exist now and even if did, I suspect that it would probably not work well for all pastors. However, with the PWP concept, each pastor and their context individually, while framing a plan and program including, training, conflict resolution, consultation, and spiritual renewal without the threat of any reprisals.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

The PWP project proposed a shift in the way pastors are traditionally compensated. The goal of PWP is to relieve the responsibility of identified congregations from the burden of providing its pastor with adequate salary compensation. This would allow sufficient funding and the freedom of the pastor to engage in transformational ministry within the community surrounding the church.

Once funded, the PWP concept will be tested first in selected inner cities across America. Pastors and congregations will be vetted and secured in order to determine the highest possible match for the success of the program. These pastors and congregations will serve as the test case for exposing PWP nationally. Once all inconsistencies have been worked out with the initial pastors and congregations, PWP will be available for kingdom building throughout the country through the process of replication and multiplication.

Methodology

This project sought to determine the perception and receptivity of pastors and church leaders to the proposed program. In order to measure how the program would be

received, they were given a pre and posttest, engaged in a focus group session, and participated in a workshop on the benefits of PWP. There was a core team who worked with me to facilitate the methodology section of the project. The core team consisted of context associates and ministry leaders. The role of the context associates was to assist in the design, implementation, and facilitation of the process. They assisted in designing the testing instruments, planning the setting up the room, meeting and greeting the participants, distributing testing instruments, gathering testing instruments at the end of each session and assisted in gathering and interpreting the data.

Ministry leaders served as servant leaders through the ministry of hospitality. These ministry leaders were on site from the duration of the program making sure the creature comforts of each participants were met. Identifying restrooms, making calls, serving meals and snacks and whatever else was required so that the participants were free to fully engage in the program.

The facilitator served to lead the process from beginning to end. The facilitator's role was to provide non-biased instruction when explaining the PWP program and to ensure that the participants were engaged and understood what was expected of them.

The program design consisted of a pre and posttest, focus group and a workshop. A project calendar was used as a timeline to ensure the program would be completed in the time allotted and also served as an outlined for the entire program. The entire implementation phase for this project was six weeks in duration. Below is the program calendar.

Program Calendar

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview first PWP pastor • Write up analysis of pastor's experience • Prepare pretest questionnaire • Administer pretest to participants • Collect and analyze pretest results
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare the focus group documents and talking points • Identify persons eligible to be a part of the focus group • Schedule 3-4 focus group sessions • Begin doing focus groups • Receive participants context assessments
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finish focus groups • Analyze context assessments • Begin workshop preparation • Schedule workshop • Participants prepare context assessment • Administer workshop
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administer posttest questionnaire • Compare results of the pretest to the posttest
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze total findings from project • Summarize results of findings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write up findings from data analysis
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Edit and finalize field work • Identify how project can be replicated

Implementation

The implementation of this project was based on data triangulation, mixed method approach and qualitative analysis. The data triangulation was based on three methods of testing: pre and posttest, a focus group, and a workshop. The mixed method approach was used in that most of the data retrieved for analysis was qualitative, but some answers need to use the quantitative approach for percentages. Below are the results of the implementation phase of the project.

Pre/Post- Test Questions and Analysis

There were ten pre and posttest questions administered at the beginning and the end of the testing period to determine the amount of knowledge gained, if any, from participating in the project. Below are the pre and posttest questions along with their corresponding results.

On a scale of 1-5, rate the following statements as they apply to your context of ministry.

1=strongly disagree 2=disagree 3=neutral 4=agree 5=strongly agree

- a) Finance is the greatest obstacle in pastoral ministry

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post- Test
1	0%	0%
2	10%	0%
3	20%	0%
4	40%	30%
5	30%	70%

There was a strong change in opinion for participants who strongly believe that insufficient funding was a great obstacle in a pastor's ministry. It is clear that while finances are an issue for pastors, that reality was not as obvious until after the program had ended. With this in mind, it becomes necessary to give permission for pastors and congregations to embrace this challenge. Congregations must look to creative ways to meet the financial obligations of their pastor to avoid them spending more time chasing money and less time doing kingdom work.

- b) Burnout had plagued your ministry at least once

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post -Test
1	10%	0%
2	0%	10%
3	0%	10%
4	50%	20%

5	40%	60%
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Burnout is a condition that plagues pastors who are overworked and often underpaid. When burnout emerges in a pastor's life, it is usually associated with finances, fidelity, and breaching established boundaries designed to keep pastor and people safe. While there were some changes from the pre and posttest results, there were minimal overall changes in this question.

c) The pressures of ministry affect your health

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post- Test
1	10%	0%
2	10%	0%
3	10%	30%
4	30%	20%
5	40%	50%

There was little change in the attitudes of the respondents from the pre to the posttest when it came to the health condition of the pastor. This could be an area for training, awareness, and growth for many congregations. Although the participants perceptions did not change sufficiently, statistics show that burnout among pastors is at an all-time high, leading to a number of social ills and even exiting the pulpit.

d) The pressures of ministry affect your family life

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post -Test
1	10%	0%
2	10%	0%
3	10%	10%
4	20%	20%
5	50%	70%

The pressures of ministry whatever they may be have a direct impact on the life of the family. As indicated by the results of the pre and posttest, there was a 30% change in attitude of the participants after they had gone through the program. Those with the most significant change were church leaders and laypersons from the context. Statistics show that divorce among clergy is around 50% and depression among clergy is around 70%. Clearly, whether it is a known fact among parishioners, the stress and pressures of ministry does have a negative effect on the family life of clergypersons.

e) Congregation hold pastor's hostage with money

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post- Test
1	0%	0%
2	40%	30%
3	0%	0%
4	20%	20%

5	40%	50%
---	-----	-----

The most significant finding from this question were those who answered they did not agree that the congregation uses money to hold the pastor hostage. This percentage went down by 10% at the conclusion of the program. What is interesting to note is that again those who did not agree were laypersons and church leaders and those that did were pastors. This is a strong indication that pastors and laity must work harder to manage the pastor's compensation package in a fair and equitable manner. This is one of the main reasons for PWP; making it possible for pastors to have sufficient income to support their family while doing the work of ministry.

f) Pastoral pressure limits the ability to be creative

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post- Test
1	0%	0%
2	30%	0%
3	0%	0%
4	20%	40%
5	50%	60%

This question gave mixed responses, although significant numbers of those answering said that the pressures of pastoring limited creative ability. Those who said it did not in the pre -test all changed their perspective at the conclusion of the program.

g) Pastors are expected to do more of their share of the work in the church

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post -Test
1	0%	0%
2	10%	10%
3	10%	10%
4	50%	10%
5	30%	70%

When asked if pastors are expected to do more than their share of the work at the end of the program, an overwhelming 70% agreed that this is the expectation of the congregation. This is another indicator of pastors being placed under enormous pressure to perform regardless of their salary level. In most cases, statistics show pastors are grossly underpaid, making the need for PWP a necessary reality in the lives of pastors and their congregations.

h) Market wages will make a difference in your ability to manage people

Responses 1-5	Pre-Test	Post -Test
1	0%	0%
2	10%	0%
3	20%	0%
4	50%	30%
5	20%	70%

While not all agreed during the pre-test, nearly 100% of the respondents reported that providing market wages would improve the managerial performance of the pastor on the posttest. Similar to paying competitive wages in other industries, workers have a greater propensity to work harder and do more when they are highly compensated for their ability to perform. While pay should not be the only motivating factor in the performance of employees, increased wages are more of an incentive than a deterrent when it comes to job performance. Certainly, pastors are not exempt from this reality.

i) Without financial pressure, more time can be invested in growing your church

Responses 1-5	Pre- Test	Post -Test
1	0%	0%
2	0%	0%
3	0%	0%
4	50%	30%
5	50%	70%

Without a doubt, all respondents report that without financial pressure, pastors can invest more time in the work of the church. This was a critical response because it proves that both pastors and laity believe that financial stability of pastors' leads to greater performance when pastors are able to invest more time in building the kingdom of God.

j) I can benefit from PWP long term

Questions 1-5	Pre- Test	Post- Test

1	0%	0%
2	0%	0%
3	0%	0%
4	40%	30%
5	60%	70%

This final question was somewhat of a non-starter. It is obvious from the strong support of the participants that PWP would be a catalyst for pastors being able to do more in the life of the church when they are unencumbered with the woes of financial issues as they seek to be faithful to the church.

Focus Group

The focus group was an intentional effort to apprise applicants on the PWP program and answer any questions they may have. Below are the questions asked of the participants and their corresponding answers.

What is PWP?

- A program that assists pastors and laity with responding to issues that creates challenges in the life of the church. It provides real solutions to the barriers of finance, education, congregational development etc.
- Relieving the pastor of financial strain in order for the pastor to maximize their vision
- Developed to help pastors overcome struggles in day to day ministry
- A needed item in the ministry
- A plan designed to help pastors and churches become effective in doing ministry without financial pressures

Why is PWP important in kingdom building?

- To prevent pastor burnouts, ministerial irresponsibility and help in spiritual growth
- Allows struggling pastors help and assistance
- Freedom to operate freely will assure more focus on kingdom building
- It will allow kingdom building without stress
- To allow the pastor to be able to do the job God called him to do. Better equipped to do the work of ministry
- To provide structure in kingdom building
- It creates opportunity that was hampered because of finances

Concept of ministering without financial pressure

- No real viable solutions
- It's a grant that provides assistance to pastors to do ministry
- Freedom to do God's will
- This concept will allow the man or woman of God to have the freedom of creative expression in his calling
- Financial issues cause lots of other problems
- Alleviate stress and strain associated with pastoring

The goal of PWP

- Partnerships that benefit the Church
- It's a simply to aid and assist the local pastor across denominational lines. To have 100 pastors within its first year
- To bring a broader understanding of what it takes to be successful in ministry

- To support pastors—100 pastors on the ground in a year
- To help pastors for kingdom building
- To finance pastors so they will be free to do the work of ministry

Benefits of PWP

- PWP will remove and situate the pastor from unhealthy situations to a healthy one
- To open the understanding of pastors for the present generation
- Helping eliminate problems of ministry do their job effectively
- Open up opportunities for true ministry to occur

Tenure of PWP

- 2-5 years depending on the status of the pastor when the program start
- 5-7 years
- Until retirement age
- 5-7 years with ongoing monitoring
- 5-7 years unbelievable
- 5-7 years

Expectations of participants in PWP

- To provide pastoral consultation.
- To fulfill all requirements of the grant
- To reach its full potential
- Good; seems to be easy to meet.

- Accountability is needed, and the structure appears to adequately assess the program
- To build the church without pressure

The focus group gave the participants an opportunity to talk freely among themselves and to vision about an ideal church environment. The focus group was conducted in a manner that each question was addressed first by the facilitator followed by the participants understanding of the question with their candid additions or subtractions from the response of the facilitator.

The responses from the participants are a result of what they felt would be the optimal response to maximize the PWP program. A good example of this is the question regarding the tenure of the participant in the PWP program. The facilitator gave a range of three to four years and most of the responses from the participants were five to seven years. Ultimately, the focus group results will be used to modify the PWP program based on the participant's responses of what would maximize the program's enrollment of qualified pastors.

Workshop on PWP

The workshop regarding PWP was the next step in the progression of establishing a viable alternative to traditional ways of pastoring. This workshop outlined the process and steps necessary for the next phase of the journey toward PWP taking place. Areas covered in the workshop are as follows:

Ministry Assessment

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	0%
2 = Disagree	0%
3 = Neutral	20%
4 = Agree	40%
5 = Strongly Agree	40%

Vision/Mission

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	10%
2 = Disagree	0%
3 = Neutral	0%
4 = Agree	30%
5 = Strongly Agree	60%

Internal Controls

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	0%
2 = Disagree	10%
3 = Neutral	10%

4 = Agree	40%
5 = Strongly Agree	40%

Equipping & Training Leaders

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	10%
2 = Disagree	0%
3 = Neutral	0%
4 = Agree	40%
5 = Strongly Agree	50%

Effective Disciple Making

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	0%
2 = Disagree	10%
3 = Neutral	10%
4 = Agree	30%
5 = Strongly Agree	50%

Worship & Membership

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	0%
2 = Disagree	10%
3 = Neutral	0%
4 = Agree	40%
5 = Strongly Agree	50%

Modified Admin Policies

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	0%
2 = Disagree	0%
3 = Neutral	20%
4 = Agree	40%
5 = Strongly Agree	40%

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	0%
2 = Disagree	10%
3 = Neutral	20%

4 = Agree	20%
5 = Strongly Agree	50%

Fit for Ministry

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	10%
2 = Disagree	0%
3 = Neutral	0%
4 = Agree	50%
5 = Strongly Agree	40%

Ministry Alignment/Realignment

Likert Scale Response	Response Percentage
1 = Strongly Disagree	10%
2 = Disagree	0%
3 = Neutral	0%
4 = Agree	40%
5 = Strongly Agree	50%

In assessing the results of the workshop, it is evident that the explanation of the goals and methodology of PWP were clearly understood. While some participants felt

that the PWP process would not benefit some areas of congregational ministry, those numbers were not critical to the overall agreement of all. Most respondents felt that the goals and vision of PWP were revolutionary, something that is needed in most churches. One lay person went as far as to say that if protestant pastors were funded similar to the Catholic church priest, it would solve many of the problems that protestant congregations have when it comes to pastors having to work additional jobs to gain sufficient income to support their families. The person went on to say that it would also allow for pastors to dedicate fulltime attention to the work of the church regardless how large or small the church is.

PWP is a necessary opportunity for all protestant denominations, reformations and independent churches to participate in, especially when their congregations or local church cannot afford to support a fulltime local pastor. As participants engaged in the project, there was initial skepticism regarding the merits of the program. Both pastors and laity were curious as to where the funds would come from to support such an endeavor. However, by the end of the program, pastors and laity were convinced that the program was solid and once the program launched, there would be no problems attracting congregations and pastors to participate.

Conclusion

The matriculation in the Doctor of Ministry program at United Theological Seminary established lasting memories and colleagues for a lifetime. The moments of being broken and restored into stronger men and women of God was an unforgettable

experience. Those times when tears would fall, disagreements elevated into heated arguments and tempers flaring only to realize that in a family unit, this is normative and necessary to establishing trust, compassion and faith in one another. Without the assistance of skilled mentors and practitioners, we would not have reached the zenith of possibilities that we reached, and we certainly would not have understood how God uses our weaknesses in ministry to empower our congregation toward kingdom building.

There was a natural hesitancy in following the prescribed outline set before me because it was not natural, and it was something that I was not accustomed to doing. Self-directed learning is critical and has become a useful and valuable tool in developing leaders in my congregations. When leaders learn the intangible benefits of self-directed learning, the level of creativity and transformational power is unfathomable. If nothing else, I am grateful for being exposed to such a power tool in moving people to their highest possibility in ministry. In the end, I relented and allowed the mentors and the process to have its way in my life. I learned how to trust the process and allow the process to teach me how to trust the God in me to do as Jesus said, greater things.

As I think about the project that was birthed out of the intersection or synergy of my context and me, I am truly baffled at that response of the congregation and those participants who assisted in making a dream and vision of ministry possible. Although this project was given birth at the level of synergy, the seed was actually planted many years earlier as I attended the Interdenominational Theological Center (ITC) in Atlanta Georgia. I can clearly remember the number of pastors who were under tremendous pressure every day to make brick without straw in pastoring their various congregations.

What was very clear then and became clearer during this project is that the pressure of pastoring is no respecter of person, belief system, denomination or reformation, and certainly gender. As I recall, students from various places in the country would gather at ITC for an education, while at the same time struggle to maintain a congregation because of a lack of financial resources to do the necessary things to maintain the church from week to week in addition to vision and grow beyond where they were.

It was from this awareness that God began to work in me to develop a solution that could have profound benefits for the kingdom as well as the wellbeing of the pastor and their respective congregations. As so, when I entered United, I was convicted and determined to make PWP a reality in my lifetime.

The project was not complicated, in fact, it was a straight forward approach to gathering data regarding the opinions of pastors and church leaders who have enjoyed the benefits of financial freedom and those whose burden was the lack of financial resources to operate effectively. Without saying, those who enjoyed financial freedom were not free from the pressures of pastoring; they were just free from the most prevailing and persistent problem for pastor and people; funding.

The project went off without a hitch and the action plan prescribed in collaboration with the context associates, professional associates, peers and mentors worked well. There were however, some areas of the project that need modification if I were to do it again. I make these recommendations in consideration of those who wish to replicate this project to assist in other significant deficiencies of kingdom building in the

future. First, I would extend this project to pastors and people in the three traditional ministry areas; inner city, suburbia, and town and country (rural areas). The pastors and ministry leaders for this project were all from the thriving mecca of Atlanta Georgia, which is noted as being a part of the Bible belt of the south. Because all participants were from Georgia, it skewed the data significantly. I would want to have the opinions of those serving in suburbia and town and country areas to add balance and a different perspective on funding and its impact on ministry development and kingdom building.

Secondly, I would extend this program to pastors from the four corners of America; north, south, east, and west to gain a perspective from the various section of the country. I would especially be interested in knowing the perspectives of those who are not serving in the Bible belt and are having a hard time with ministry and growing churches when funding is not the primary pressure and motivating factor in ministry.

Thirdly, I would increase the number of participants to approximately fifteen to twenty per region of the country to increase the validity of the responses. I would also make sure that the participants were balanced based on gender, ethnicity, and orientation. These are important factors in reaching the kingdom in today's climate.

Finally, I would expand the testing instrument to include other pressures that affect the performance of pastors to include burn out, social failures, depression, and death. This would balance the scales of reason and research to avoid the perception that money would solve all the spiritual ills of the church.

As this season of ministry draws to a close, I am reminded of the words of the great Mary McCloud Bethune, founder of the Bethune-Cookman (College) University “Enter to learn, depart to serve.” As I entered the United Theological Seminary, I was eager to learn all I could in order to initiate PWP. As I leave, I leave with a heart to serve and a renewed mind to build God’s kingdom on earth based on the resources, equipping, and assignment given to me by God. With the help of God and the willingness of pastors and congregations all over the country, I am confident that God will give us good success.

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